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تفسیر انوار البیان

ILLUMINATING DISCOURSES *on the* NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

By
Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

DARUL-ISHAAT
Karachi-Pakistan.

Revised Edition
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ON THE
NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

By: Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Volume Five
Part IX & X
Para Twenty Seven to Para Thirty

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based on *Ma'ariful Quran*

DARUL ISHAAT
Urdu Bazar, Karachi

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Para Twenty Six

هَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلْمُكْرَمِينَ (24) إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا ۖ قَالَ سَلَٰمٌ قَوْمٌ
مُّنكَرُونَ (25) فَرَاغَ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ فَجَآءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ (26) فَقَرَّبَهُۥٓ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ
(27) فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَٰمٍ عَلِيمٍ (28) فَأَقْبَلَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُهُۥ فِى
صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ (29) قَالُوا۟ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْحَكِيمُ
ٱلْعَلِيمُ (30)

(24) Has the story of Ibrahīm's عليه السلام honourable guests reached you? (25) When they came to him and greeted with Salām, he said, "Peace be upon you too. You people are strangers." (26) He then went to his family and returned with a fat (roasted) calf. (27) He served it to them and (when they did not partake of it) he said, "Are you not going to eat?" (28) He grew afraid of them. They said, "Do not be afraid," and they gave him the glad tidings of an intelligent child. (29) His wife arrived calling loudly, smote her face and said, "An old barren woman?" (30) They said, "Thus has your Lord said, and He is the Wise, the All Knowing."

Para Twenty Seven

۞ قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ (31) قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّآ أُرْسِلْنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ (32) لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ
حِجَارَةً مِّن طِينٍ (33) مُّسَوَّمَةً عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ (34) فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَن كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
(35) فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ (36) وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ ٱلْعَذَابَ
ٱلْأَلِيمَ (37)

(31) He (Sayyidina Ibrahīm) said, "What is your duty, O messengers?" (32) They replied, "We have been sent to a criminal nation..." (33) "...to rain mud stones upon them." (34) "(The stones) have been marked by your Lord for them who transgress the limits." (35) "We shall remove those who are believers from the town." (36) "We found only a single home of Muslims there." (37) In this incident We have left a lesson for those who fear a painful punishment.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام RECEIVES GUESTS WHO INFORM HIM OF THE BIRTH OF HIS SON

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام left his hometown in the vicinity of Babylon and migrated to Palestine, where he took up residence. Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام also migrated to Syria *(Shām)* and lived with people who occupied several towns on the banks of the Jordan River. Allāh made Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام a Prophet and he made tremendous efforts to reform the people who engaged in many evil practices, homosexuality being the most prominent vice. Eventually, when they refused to heed his advice and warnings, Allāh Ta'āla dispatched a group of angels to punish them. In human form, these angels first paid a visit to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Because the angels are revered bondsmen of Allāh, Allāh says, *"Has the story of Ibrahīm's عليه السلام honourable guests reached you?"*

When they came to him and greeted with Salām, he said, *"Peace be upon you too."* However, because it was the first time that he had met them, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام added, *"You people are strangers."* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was hardly with them when he went to his wife and returned with a fat roasted calf. When he served the calf to the guests, they did not eat (because angels do not eat food). Encouraging them to eat, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام asked, *"Are you not going to eat?"* When they failed to respond after the verbal offer, *"He grew afraid of them."* According to verse 52 of Surah Hijr (15), Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said to them, *"We are afraid of you."* He was afraid because, not knowing that they were angels, he thought that they had come to him with evil intentions.

The angels calmed Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام by saying, *"Do not be afraid. Indeed, we wish to convey to you the glad tidings of a knowledgeable child."* [*Surah Hijr (15), verse 53*]

Surprised at this news, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, *"Do you give me these glad tidings whereas old-age has afflicted me? What glad tidings can you deliver?"* [*Surah Hijr (15), verse 54*]

Allāh relates the story in Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 71,72*] when he says, *"His wife, standing by, laughed as We conveyed to her the glad tidings of Is'hāq, and Ya'qūb after Is'hāq. She said, 'Woe is me! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman and my husband here is an old man? This is indeed a strange event!"*

Here in Surah Dhāriyāt, Allāh relates the incident by saying, *"His wife arrived calling loudly, smote her face and said, "An old barren woman?"* The addition of the adjective *"barren"* makes it clear that she was a woman who had not born any child before. The angels replied, *"Thus has your Lord said, and He is the Wise, the All Knowing."* Allāh had already decreed that a child should be born to them, for He knows best and can do as He pleases. Eventually, the child Is'hāq عليه السلام was born, who was the father of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام. Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام was known as Isrā'īl and his progeny are referred to as the Bani Isrā'īl.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE NATION OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام

When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was convinced that these people were angels, he asked them, *"What is your duty, O messengers?"* They replied, *"We have*

been sent to (destroy) a criminal nation [the nation of Sayyidina Lūt] *to rain clay stones upon them.* (The stones) *have been marked by your Lord for them who transgress the limits."* Each stone bore the name of the transgressor it was intended to strike.

Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verses 31,32*] mentions that the angels said, *"We are to destroy the inhabitants of this town. Its inhabitants are certainly oppressors. Ibrahīm* عليه السلام *said, 'Lūt is among them.' They replied, 'We know best who is present there. We shall definitely rescue him and his family, except for his wife. She will be among those left behind."*

The incident in Surah Dhāriyāt continues as follows: The angels said further, *"We shall remove those who are believers from the town. We only found a single home of Muslims there."* The single home of believers refers to the household of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام with the exception of his wife. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the only believers in the town were Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and his two daughters. They were the only three people who were rescued from the punishment. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubayr رحمة الله عليه that there were 13 believers. If this is correct, the "single home of Muslims" will be interpreted to mean that they had all gathered in the house of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام.

The angels then came to Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and told him, *"So travel with your family during a portion of the night, follow on their heels and none of you should turn around. And proceed whence you have been commanded"* [*Surah Hijr (15), verse 65*]. Describing the punishment, Allāh says in verses 73 and 74 of Surah Hijr (15), *"So a scream seized them at sunrise. We turned them upside down and showered clay pebbles on them."*

Some commentators mention that the scream destroyed those living in the area and their land was turned upside-down. Those living in the outlying areas were destroyed by the shower of stones.

Allāh concludes the episode by saying, *"In this incident We have left a lesson for those who fear a painful punishment."* Whereas the ruins of these cities ought to be a lesson for people, they treat it as a place of sightseeing and touring. The Dead Sea now marks the spot where the nation of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام was destroyed. The destruction of Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام nation is mentioned in Surah An'ām [*Surah 6, verses 80-84*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 77-83*], Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 61-79*], Surah Anbiyā [*Surah 21, verses 74,75*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 160-175*], Surah Naml [*Surah 27, verses 54-58*] and in Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verses 32-35*].

وَفِي مُوسَىٰٓ إِذۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰهُ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ بِسُلۡطَٰنٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَتَوَلَّىٰ بِرُكۡنِهِۦ وَقَالَ سَٰحِرٌ أَوۡ
مَجۡنُونٞ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَأَخَذۡنَٰهُ وَجُنُودَهُۥ فَنَبَذۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡيَمِّ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٞ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَفِي عَادٍ إِذۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا
عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلرِّيحَ ٱلۡعَقِيمَ ﴿٤١﴾ مَا تَذَرُ مِن شَيۡءٍ أَتَتۡ عَلَيۡهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتۡهُ كَٱلرَّمِيمِ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَفِي
ثَمُودَ إِذۡ قِيلَ لَهُمۡ تَمَتَّعُواْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٖ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَعَتَوۡاْ عَنۡ أَمۡرِ رَبِّهِمۡ فَأَخَذَتۡهُمُ ٱلصَّٰعِقَةُ

وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مِن قِيَامٍ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنتَصِرِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّن
قَبْلُ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

(38) And (there is also a lesson) in (the story of) Mūsa عليه السلام when We sent him to phara'oh (Fir'oun) with a clear proof (39) However, phara'oh (Fir'oun) turned away together with his party and said, "(He is) either a magician or a madman" (40) So We seized him and his army and cast them into the ocean while he lamented. (41) And (there is also a lesson) in (the story of) the Ād when we sent a wind to them that was devoid of any good. (42) It reduced everything it passed to smithereens. (43) And (there is also a lesson) in (the story of) the Thamūd when they were told, "Enjoy yourselves for a while." (44) They transgressed against the command of their Lord, so a punishment seized them as they looked on. (45) They were unable even to stand and were helpless to avenge themselves. (46) Such was the condition of the nation of Nūh عليه السلام before. They were indeed a sinful nation.

THE DESTRUCTION OF PHARA'OH *(FIR'OUN)*, THE ĀD AND THE THAMŪD

After recounting the destruction of Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام people, Allāh speaks about the rebellion and subsequent annihilation of phara'oh *(Fir'oun)*, the nation of Ād and the nation of Thamūd.

Allāh says, *"And (there is also a lesson) in (the story of) Mūsa* عليه السلام *when We sent him to Fir'oun with a clear proof"* The *"clear proof"* refers to the various miracles that Allāh Ta'āla enabled Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to carry out. These miracles were so convincing that they were a *"clear proof*" to any person that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was definitely Allāh's Prophet and that his invitation to Oneness of Allāh was certainly the truth. However, despite the clear signs of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام prophethood, *"Fir'oun turned away together with his party and said, '(He is) either a magician or a madman!"* phara'oh *(Fir'oun)*, his courtiers, his army and all his followers were then drowned because they all adopted the same proud attitude and refused to accept the truth. Allāh says, *"So We seized him and his army and cast them into the ocean as he perpetrated lamentable acts."* His deeds and his behaviour were a source of regret to him because they resulted in his own destruction as well as in the destruction of his people. The destruction of phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* has been discussed in several Surahs and will, Insha Allāh, also be discussed in Surah Nāzi'āt [*Surah 79, verses 15 to 26*].

Allāh continues to narrate, *"And (there is also a lesson) in (the story of) the Ād when we sent a wind to them that was devoid of any good."* The story of the Ād has already passed in Surah A'rāf [Surah 7, verses *65-72]*, Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 50-60]*, Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 123-140*], and Surah HāMīm Sajdah [*Surah 41, verses 13-16*]. The incident is also mentioned in Surah Qamar [*Surah 54, verses 18-22*] and in Surah Hāqqa [*Surah 69, verses 6-8*].

Allāh sent Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام as a messenger to them. The Ād were an extremely proud and powerful nation who made the claim, *"Who can be more powerful than us?"* Allāh sent a wind to destroy them that was extremely

devastating and held no good for them. If the wind brought them rain, it would have had some benefit for them. However, the wind was not only devoid of rain but it was devoid of any good whatsoever. Describing the punishment, Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"As for the Ād, they were destroyed by an icy tempest. Allāh unleashed it upon them for seven consecutive nights and eight consecutive days. You would have seen them lying flat on the ground as if they were hollow palm trunks. Do you see any of them surviving?"*

Here in Surah Dhāriyāt Allāh describes the intensity of the wind by saying, *'it reduced everything it passed to smithereens."* Allāh Ta'āla uses the Arabic word *"Ramīm"* to describe the remains of everything that the wind passed. This word generally refers to decomposed remains of corpses and the crushed remains of dry grass. The various verses describing their punishment make it clear that when the punishment struck, the Ād were felled like palm trunks while everything about them was reduced to dust. Of course, after the passage of time, their bodies were also reduced to dust.

The wind that destroyed the Ād blew from a westerly direction (called the 'Dabūr' in Arabic). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said, *"I have been assisted with the 'Saba' and the Ād were destroyed with the 'Dabūr'."* The Saba is a wind that blows from an easterly direction. It is this wind that drove the disbelievers away from Madinah when they lay siege to Madinah during the Battle of the Trench.

Allāh Ta'āla then discusses the destruction of the Thamūd. Allāh sent Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام as a Prophet to them. However, they were obstinate and refused to accept the message of Oneness of Allāh. The details of the Thamūd are discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 73-79*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 61-68*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 141-159*], Surah HāMīm Sajdah [*Surah 41, verses 17-18*], Surah Qamar [*Surah 54, verses 23-32*] and in Surah Hāqqa [*Surah 69, verses 4-5*].

When the Thamūd requested that Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام causes a pregnant camel to emerge from a mountain, Allāh made this miracle possible. However, when they were told that the camel should be allowed to drink by herself every alternate day and that their camels should drink during the other days, they grew upset. They eventually killed the camel despite warnings from Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام who said to them." *This camel of Allāh is a sign for you, so leave it to graze in Allāh 's land and do not afflict it with evil, for then a painful punishment will seize you."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 73*]

When they killed the camel, Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام said to them *"Enjoy yourselves for awhile."* Allāh mentions in Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 65]* that Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام said to them. *"Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days. This is a promise that will not be falsified."* As promised, they were wiped out after three days. Allāh says, *"a punishment seized them as they looked on."* Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"So, because of what they earned, a catastrophic punishment seized them, which was extremely humiliating."* [*Surah 41, verse 17*]

The Aarbic word *"Sā'iqa"* used in both the above verses to describe the punishment has been simply translated as *"punishment"*. Commentators mention that it actually refers to a form of punishment that is inflicted by a bolt of lightning or a thunderclap. The same punishment has been described in Surah Hūd and Surah Qamar as "a scream". Nevertheless, it struck them after three

days. Allāh says in Surah Hūd, *"A scream seized the oppressors and they were left lying face down in their homes as if they never existed there."* [*Surah 11, verse 67.68*]

"They were unable even to stand and were helpless to avenge themselves." When Allāh's punishment strikes a nation, nothing can help them.

Allāh then speaks of the punishment that afflicted the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"Such was the condition with the nation of Nūh* عليه السلام *before (the Ād and Thamūd) They were indeed a sinful nation (as well, just like the others)."* Numerous Surahs discuss the incident of Sayyidina Nūh and his nation.

وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بَنَيۡنَٰهَا بِأَيۡيْدٖ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ (47) وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ فَرَشۡنَٰهَا فَنِعۡمَ ٱلۡمَٰهِدُونَ (48) وَمِن
كُلِّ شَيۡءٍ خَلَقۡنَا زَوۡجَيۡنِ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَذَكَّرُونَ (49) فَفِرُّوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِۖ إِنِّي لَكُم مِّنۡهُ نَذِيرٞ مُّبِينٞ
(50) وَلَا تَجۡعَلُواْ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَۖ إِنِّي لَكُم مِّنۡهُ نَذِيرٞ مُّبِينٞ (51) كَذَٰلِكَ مَآ أَتَى ٱلَّذِينَ
مِن قَبۡلِهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُواْ سَاحِرٌ أَوۡ مَجۡنُونٌ (52) أَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِهِۦۚ بَلۡ هُمۡ قَوۡمٞ طَاغُونَ (53)
فَتَوَلَّ عَنۡهُمۡ فَمَآ أَنتَ بِمَلُومٖ (54) وَذَكِّرۡ فَإِنَّ ٱلذِّكۡرَىٰ تَنفَعُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ (55)

(47) We created the sky with might and We certainly possess vast powers. (48) And we have spread the earth out. What excellent spreaders. (49) We have created pairs from everything so that you may take heed. (50) So hasten towards Allāh. Verily I am a clear warner to you from Him. (51) Do not ascribe another deity with Allāh. Verily I am a clear warner to you from Him. (52) In a like manner, whenever a Prophet came to those before them, they said that he is a magician or a madman. (53) Have they made bequests to each other (to behave in this manner)? Nay, but they are a rebellious folk. (54) Ignore them, for you will not be blamed. (55) Continue advising because advice is beneficial for the believers.

THE CREATION OF THE EARTH AND SKY WITH THE INSTRUCTION TO HASTEN TOWARDS ALLĀH

In these verses Allāh speaks about the creation of many of His creation and instructs man to turn to Him and to remain steadfast on Oneness of Allāh. Allāh discusses many aspects in these verses.

Firstly. Allāh begins by saying, *"We created the sky with might and We certainly possess vast powers."* Allāh' s powers are infinite and He is Able to do as He pleases. Allāh experienced no difficulty in creating the skies and everything occupying space. Allāh mentions in Surah Qāf, *"We have created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in six days without fatigue even remotely touching Us."* [*Surah 50, verse 38*]

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه translates *"'Innā Lamusi'ūn" (translated above as "We certainly possess vast powers ") as 'it is We who grant abundant sustenance."*

Secondly. *"And we have spread the earth out. What excellent spreaders!"* Man is able to lie down and sleep comfortably on the earth without fearing that he will

fall off somewhere. Allāh asks in Surah Ghāshiya,? *"And (have they not looked at) the earth, how it was spread out?"* [*Surah 88, verse 20*]

Thirdly. "We *have created pairs from everything...*" Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه states that this refers to the opposites that Allāh has created like the day and night, good fortune and ill fortune, guidance and deviation, the earth and the sky, black and white, health and illness, etc. Allāh created all of this *"...so that you may take heed"* i.e. by witnessing all these bounties, man should realise that Allāh is his All Powerful Lord. He should then turn his attention towards Allāh and worship only Him.

Fourthly. *"So hasten towards Allāh."* Worship Allāh and never disobey Him.

Fifthly. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to announce to the people, *"Verily I am a clear warner to you from Him."*

Sixthly. *"Do not ascribe another deity with Allāh."* This command to abstain from polytheism *(shirk)* is clear.

Seventhly. *"Verily I am a clear warner to you from Him."*

Eighthly. Allāh Ta'āla then tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the opposition that he receives from the polytheists is nothing new because *"In a like manner, whenever a Prophet came to those before them (i.e. before the Makkans), they said that he is a magician or a madman."* However, these Anbiya (The Holy Prophets) عليهم السلام exercised patience and persevered with their duties.

Ninthly. *Allāh asks, "Have they (i.e. the various nations) made bequests to each other (to behave in this manner)? Nay, but they are a rebellious folk."* The question is rhetorical. It is obvious that every nation could not have made a bequest to the nation after them. It was the inherent rebelliousness of every nation that drove them to oppose the Prophets عليهم السلام.

Tenthly. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Ignore them, for you will not be blamed."* The duty of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to do his best to convey the message of Islām clearly to the masses. After doing this, he could not be blamed for those who refused to accept.

Eleventhly. Allāh finally instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to persevere in his duty when He says, *"Continue advising because advice is beneficial for the believers."* Advice is extremely beneficial for those who are destined to be believers. As for those who have already believed, it serves to fortify their belief. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَآ أُرِيدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَن يُطْعِمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلرَّزَّاقُ ذُو ٱلْقُوَّةِ ٱلْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾ فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ذَنُوبًا مِّثْلَ ذَنُوبِ أَصْحَٰبِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن يَوْمِهِمُ ٱلَّذِى يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

(56) I have created man and Jinn only to worship Me. (57) I require neither sustenance from them nor do I want them to feed Me. (58) Without doubt, Allāh

is the Sustainer, the Possessor of absolute power, Strong. (59) There shall certainly be substantial punishment for the oppressors, which shall be similar to the punishment of those like them, so do not hurry Me. (60) Woe be to the disbelievers on the day about which they have been promised.

ALLĀH HAS CREATED MAN AND JINN ONLY FOR HIS WORSHIP AND HE DOES NOT REQUIRE ANY SUSTENANCE FROM THEM

Allāh clearly declares, *"I have created man and Jinn only to worship Me."* From among His creation, Allāh has granted intelligence to man, Jinn and angels. In addition to this, Allāh has also granted man and Jinn the capacity to carry out good and evil. Allāh has created man and Jinn for the express purpose of worshipping Him. However, it is evident that those who are obedient to Him are fewer in number than the disobedient ones whereas man and Jinn ought to be exerting all their efforts to obey Allāh. While Allāh has informed man and Jinn that they have been created to worship Him, he has also warned them saying, *'I shall definitely fill Hell with the multitude of man and Jinn"* [*Surah Hūd (11), verse 119*]. It is therefore incumbent on all of mankind to worship Allāh Alone and to abstain from disbelief and sin.

Allāh says further, *"I require neither sustenance from them nor do I want them to feed Me."* Allāh expresses His independence in this verse. Unlike the masters of this world who want their slaves to earn for them, Allāh Ta'āla requires nothing from His slaves. Mankind can do nothing to benefit Allāh and the worship they undertake is only for their own benefit.

Allāh asserts, *"Without doubt, Allāh is the Sustainers, the Possessor of absolute power, Strong.* "Allāh sustains everything in the universe and none can compare with His power and strength. How can creation ever hope to provide Him with sustenance?

Allāh then speaks of the punishment that the disbelievers shall have to face when He says, *"There shall certainly be substantial punishment for the oppressors, which shall be similar to the punishment of those like them, so do not hurry Me."* The disbelievers shall certainly receive the punishment they deserve. The fact that the punishment has not yet arrived does not mean that they will be able to escape from it.

The Arabic word *"Dhanūb"* (translated above as *"substantial punishment")* actually refers to a bucket that is full. It is used metaphorically here to denote punishment.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Woe be to the disbelievers on the day about which they have been promised."* While some commentators state that this day refers to the day when the Battle of Badr took place, others maintain that it refers to the Day of Judgement.

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سورة الطور

Makkan	Surah At-Tūr	Verses 49

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالطُّورِ ﴿١﴾ وَكِتَابٍ مَسْطُورٍ ﴿٢﴾ فِي رَقٍّ مَنْشُورٍ ﴿٣﴾ وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ ﴿٤﴾
وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ ﴿٥﴾ وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾ مَا لَهُ مِنْ
دَافِعٍ ﴿٨﴾ يَوْمَ تَمُورُ السَّمَاءُ مَوْرًا ﴿٩﴾ وَتَسِيرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا ﴿١٠﴾ فَوَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ
لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي خَوْضٍ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ يَوْمَ يُدَعُّونَ إِلَىٰ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعًّا
﴿١٣﴾ هَٰذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ أَفَسِحْرٌ هَٰذَا أَمْ أَنْتُمْ لَا
تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ اصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) By the oath of Mount Tūr... (2) .. and the written book.,. (3) ... which is in an open parchment. (4) And (by the oath of) the "Baytul Ma'mūr",... (5) ...the raised roof... (6) ... and the kindled ocean. (7) Indeed, the punishment of your Lord shall take place. (8) There shall be none to avert it. (9) The day when the sky shall tremble uncontrollably... (10) ... and the mountains will fly through the air. (11) Woe be to the deniers on that day... (12) ... Those who are frolicking in their vanities. (13) The day when they will be forcibly shoved into the Fire of Hell. (14) "This is the Fire that you used to deny!" (15) "Is this magic or are you unable to see?" (16) "Enter into it! Bear with it or don't it, will make no difference to you! You are being recompensed only for what you used to do."

THE MISERABLE CONDITION OF THE DISBELIEVERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT WHEN THEY WILL BE THRUST INTO HELL

In these verses Allāh takes oaths on certain things that bear great significance to man. Thereafter, Allāh asserts, *"Indeed, the punishment of your Lord shall take place."* Allāh emphasises this fact with the various oaths because many people deny it. Such oaths are also taken at the beginning of Surah Dhāriyāt (*Surah 51*) and Surah Nāzi'āt (*Surah 79*).

Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"By the oath of Mount Tūr."* This is the mountain on which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام stood when Allāh spoke to him. Thereafter, Allāh Ta'āla takes an oath by *"the written book'* "*Ruhul Ma'āni*" has reported several interpretations of this. One interpretation is that it refers to the book of deeds that will either be given to people on the Day of Judgement either in their right hands or in their left hands. Other commentators state that this refers to the Qur'ān, while another group of commentators are of the opinion that it refers to the *"Lowhul Mahfūz (the Protected tablet, in which the deeds of mankind have been recorded from eternity)"*.

Describing the "written book" Allāh says that it is "in an open parchment". The Arabic word "riq" (translated above as "parchment") actually refers to a thin piece of leather. This was used as writing material during the early days. The word "Manshūr" means "open . This adjective supports the opinion of those commentators who maintain that the "written book" refers to peoples' books of deeds because Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl [Surah 17, verse 13], "On the Day of Judgement We shall take out for him a book that he will see opened before him."

"And (by the oath of) the "Baytul Mamūr". When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *saw this during the Mi'rāj (Ascension), he asked Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *what it was. Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *replied, "This is the Baytul Mamūr. Every day seventy thousand angels enter it and once they emerge, they never ever get another opportunity to return to it." [Muslim v. 1 p. 94]*

It is mentioned in *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* that the sanctity that the Baytul Ma'mūr enjoys in the heavens is just like that which the Ka'ba enjoys on earth. Daily 70000 angels make Circumambulation of the Baytul Ma'mūr, enter it to perform Salāh and then never receive a second chance.

Allāh then takes an oath by *"the raised roof*. *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that this refers to the Arsh (throne) of Allāh, which is the roof of Heaven.

"...and (by the oath of) the kindled ocean." The oceans shall be kindled into a blazing fire on the Day of Judgement, as Allāh says in Surah Takwīr [*Surah 81, verse 6*], *"When the oceans are set alight."*

Some commentators have translated the verse to mean *"By the oath of the brimming ocean."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that only the person intending Hajj, Umrah or Jihād in Allāh's path should venture to travel by sea because beneath the sea is fire and beneath this fire is an ocean. [*Abu Dawūd v. 1 p. 327*]

Allāh Ta'āla begins by taking an oath by Mount Tūr, which is a sacred place. Thereafter, Allāh swears by the book in which people's deeds are recorded. Third, an oath is taken by the Baytul Ma'mūr around which the angels make Circumambulation and glorify Allāh. Then, Allāh takes an oath by His throne *(Arsh)* – a place where the angels live, from where revelation comes and where Heaven is found. Finally, Allāh takes an oath by the "kindled ocean" — a place of fire.

Allāh takes all these oaths to emphasise the fact that *'indeed, the punishment of your Lord shall take place"* and *"There shall be none to avert it."* Man ought to realise from this that the Being Who created all of these great phenomena is certainly capable of rewarding the good and punishing the evil. When Judgement will dawn, there can be none to avert it.

Sayyidina Jubayr bin Mut'im رضى الله عنه narrates that when he had not yet accepted Islām, he came to Madinah to discuss the issue of the captives of Badr with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When he came close to the masjid, he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reciting Surah Tūr as he led the Maghrib Salāh. Sayyidina Jubayr رضى الله عنه states that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reached the verse: *'indeed, the punishment of your Lord shall take place. There shall be none to avert it"* he felt as if his heart had burst. The fear for Allāh's punishment made him accept Islām because he felt as if the punishment would overtake him before he stood up from his place. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 337*]

Allāh then describes the scene of the Day of Judgement. Allāh says that Judgement will be *"The day when the sky shall tremble uncontrollably and the mountains will fly through the air."* Allāh says in Surah Takwīr [*Surah 81, verse 3*], *"When the mountains shall be made to fly about."* A verse of Surah Naml reads, *"You will look at the mountains, thinking them to be solid, but they will be passing by like clouds."* [*Surah 27, verse 88*]

Allāh says in Surah Wā'qiah, *"When the earth shall be violently shaken and the mountains powdered to dust and become floating dust particles."* [*Surah 56, verses 4-6*]

"Woe be to the deniers on that day. "Describing these people, Allāh says that they are *"Those who are frolicking in their vanities."* They are preoccupied with various types of idle pursuits as a form of amusement. The author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* comments by saying that these people are engaged in promoting falsehood, speak against the truth and make sport and amusement their occupations. Whereas this is their occupation in this world, their condition in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* shall be different. Allāh says that on the Day of Judegment *"they will be forcibly shoved into the Fire of Hell."* The angels will push them into Hell with their hands shackled to their necks.

Allāh states in Surah Rahmān, *"The criminals will be recognised by their traits and will be seized by their forelocks and feet."* [*Surah 55, verse 41*]

It will then be said to them, *"This is the Fire that you used to deny!"* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to invite them to the truth and perform miracles, these polytheists used to say that his acts are mere acts of magic. For this reason, they will be asked, *'Is this (punishment) magic or are you unable to see?"*

It will also be said to them, *"Enter into it! Bear with it or don 't, it will make no difference to you!"* By exercising patience in this world, difficulties are often alleviated. However, in the Hereafter, nothing will alleviate their suffering. Their punishment will not be because of any injustice against them, but merely a recompense for the evil deeds they carried out. Therefore, Allāh shall tell them, *"You are being recompensed only for what you used to do."*

إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَنَعِيمٍ ﴿17﴾ فَٰكِهِينَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ وَوَقَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿18﴾ كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿19﴾ مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ ۖ وَزَوَّجْنَٰهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿20﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَٰنٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَآ أَلَتْنَٰهُم مِّنْ عَمَلِهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۚ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ ﴿21﴾ وَأَمْدَدْنَٰهُم بِفَٰكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿22﴾ يَتَنَٰزَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَّا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْثِيمٌ ﴿23﴾ ۞ وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَّهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُونٌ ﴿24﴾ وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿25﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِىٓ أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿26﴾ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَىٰنَا عَذَابَ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴿27﴾ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْبَرُّ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿28﴾

(17) Verily those who fear Allāh shall be in gardens and bounties... (18) .... Enjoying what their Lord gives them. And their Lord shall save them from the punishment of the Blaze. (19) "Eat and drink with blessings in return for the deeds that you carried out." (20) They will be reclining on couches arranged in rows and We shall marry them to fair maidens with large eyes. (21) Those who carry out good deeds and whose progeny follow them in belief We shall join their progeny with them without reducing anything from their deeds. Every person shall be detained for his deeds. (22) We shall grant them additional fruit and meat as they desire. (23) There they will pass around a cup in which there is no absurd talk and no sin. (24) Their youngsters shall wait on them, appearing to be concealed pearls. (25) They will face each other asking questions. (26) They will say, "Before this we used to be fearful among our families." (27) "However, Allāh graced us and saved us from the punishment of Hell." (28) "Indeed we always used to pray before. He is certainly the One who treats with kindness, the Most Merciful."

THE BOUNTIES THAT THOSE WHO FEAR ALLĀH WILL ENJOY IN THE HEREAFTER

After speaking of the punishment that the sinners and disbelievers will suffer in Hell, Allāh speaks of the bounties that the believers will enjoy in Heaven. Allāh says, *"Verily those who fear Allāh shall be in gardens and bounties, enjoying what their Lord gives them.* The people of Heaven will be busy enjoying the bounties that Allāh has reserved for them, the greatest of which is that He saved them *'from the punishment of the Blaze."* Their bounties shall last forever and they will never have to fear suffering punishment. It will be said to them, *"Eat and drink with blessings in return for the deeds that you carried out."* The food and drink of Heaven shall cause no difficulty to a person irrespective of the quantity that he eats and drinks.

In addition to this, *"They will be reclining on couches arranged in rows."* This is also mentioned in Surah Dukhān [*Surah 44, verse 53*] and Surah Wā'qiah [*Surah 56, verses 15,16*]. It is gathered from these verses that the couches will be arranged in rows facing each other.

Allāh then mentions the boon of marriage when He says, ... *and We shall marry them to fair maidens with large eyes."* After creating Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, Allāh created a spouse for him in the form of Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام. Man's progeny succeeded from them as couples married to have children. Because man instinctively requires companionship, Allāh shall cater for this in Heaven as well. Together with their wives of this world, Allāh shall also marry the men of Heaven to the *"Hūr Īn"* whom He has created expressly for them in Heaven. The Arabic word *"Hūr"* is the plural of the word *"Hawrā"* which refers to women who are extremely fair in complexion. *"Īn"* is the plural of *"Aynā"* which refers to women who have large eyes.

THE PROGENY OF THE BELIEVERS

Allāh Ta'āla then mentions another bounty that he will bestow on the people of Heaven. This bounty is that Allāh will allow the family and progeny of people to reach their ranks in Heaven even though the others have not attained these ranks. This will be done to please the people of Heaven without reducing their rewards in any way. Allāh says further, *"Every person shall be detained for his deeds"* i.e. no person will be held responsible for the misdeeds of another, even though the other is a member of his family.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes from "Mustadrak Hākim" and "Bayhaqi" that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه said, *"Indeed Allāh shall elevate the rank of a believer's (Mu'min's) progeny to his rank even though their deeds are fewer. This will be done to satisfy the people of Belief."* He then recited the above verse.

"Tabrāni" narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a person is entered into Heaven, he will ask about the whereabouts of his parents, wife and children. When he is told that they were unable to reach his rank, he will make Supplication to Allāh. Allāh will then command that they also be elevated to his rank.

Allāh then mentions another bounty when He says, *"We shall grant them additional fruit and meat as they desire."* Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, "You will have an abundance of fruit to eat there (in Heaven)." [*Surah 43, verse 72*]

Allāh says in Surah Mursalāt [*Surah 77, verse 41*], *"Indeed the pious shall be in shade and springs and shall have the fruits they desire."* A verse of Surah Wā'qiah reads, *"A variety of fruits to choose from and the meat of birds of their choice."* [*Surah 56, verses 20,21*]

Therefore, it is clear that people will have *"the fruits they desire"* as well as *"a variety of fruit to choose from"*. The above verses also make it clear that in addition to *"the meat of birds"*, they shall have *"meat as they desire"*, referring to all other types of meat. All these foods shall be eaten as and when one pleases. Unlike occasions in this world when a person is forced to eat things that he dislikes, he will thoroughly enjoy everything he eats in Heaven.

"There they will pass around a cup in which there is no absurd talk and no sin." There shall be no shortage of anything in Heaven. Therefore, passing a cup around will be purely for the pleasure of doing so. The Arabic word "ka 's" (translated above as "cup") actually refers to a cup that is brimming with drink. Allāh says in Surah Naba, *"And (the pious shall receive) brimming glasses" [Surah 78, verse 34].* As and when people require, they shall have a cup full of drink, as Allāh says in Surah Dahar, *"those filling will fill by an appropriate measured! [Surah 76, verse 16]*

These cups will be filled with drinks from *"Tasnīm"* with mixtures of ginger and camphor. By drinking these drinks, the people of Heaven will not become intoxicated and will therefore not make absurd statements and babble nonsensical talks. Because the wines of Heaven will be a special bounty from Allāh, there will not even be any sin for consuming them. It is for this that Allāh says, *"There they will pass around a cup in which there is no absurd talk and no sin."*

There will be young lads in Heaven who will serve these drinks to the people. Allāh says, *"Their youngsters shall wait on them, appearing to be concealed pearls (in their beauty and in the smooth texture of their complexion)."* Allāh says in Surah Dahar, *"Lads of eternal youth will wait on them. When you see them, you will think that they are scattered pearls."* [*Surah 76, verse 19*]

Allāh says further, *"They will face each other asking questions."* They will ask each other the reasons for which they were entered into Heaven. Although they will be aware of these reasons, they will ask each other to remember these things and to remind themselves of Allāh's favours on them.

"They will say, 'Before this we used to be fearful among our families. "' When these people lived in the world, they were constantly worried that they should never disobey Allāh and earn His wrath. They were always wary of the fact that they would have to face Allāh and render an account for their deeds. This statement is mentioned in Surah Hāqqa in the following words, *'It was always convinced that I shall certainly meet my reckoning."* [*Surah 69, verse 20*]. Conviction and concern about the Ākhirah (Hereafter) is the true capital of a believer. Once a believer has acquired this, he will easily pass the stages there.

The people of Heaven will say further, *"However, Allāh graced us and saved us from the punishment of Hell."* A believer realises that the actions he carries out do not owe their existence to his own intelligence and dexterity. He believed from the depths of his heart that good deeds, Belief, piety, abstinence, concern for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* and every other thing is a blessing from Allāh. Similarly, entry into Heaven and salvation from Hell are also achieved solely through Allāh's grace and favour.

"Indeed we always used to pray before (in this world). He is certainly the One who treats with kindness, the Most Merciful." Through His munificence, Allāh accepted their supplication and entered them into Heaven.

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَآ أَنتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهِۦ رَيْبَ ٱلْمَنُونِ ﴿٣٠﴾ قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا۟ فَإِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ

أَحْلَٰمُهُم بِهَٰذَآ ۚ أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿32﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُۥ ۚ بَل لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿33﴾ فَلْيَأْتُوا۟
بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِۦٓ إِن كَانُوا۟ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿34﴾ أَمْ خُلِقُوا۟ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَىْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُونَ
﴿35﴾ أَمْ خَلَقُوا۟ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ ۚ بَل لَّا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿36﴾ أَمْ عِندَهُمْ خَزَآئِنُ رَبِّكَ
أَمْ هُمُ ٱلْمُصَيْطِرُونَ ﴿37﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَسْتَمِعُونَ فِيهِ ۖ فَلْيَأْتِ مُسْتَمِعُهُم بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ
﴿38﴾ أَمْ لَهُ ٱلْبَنَٰتُ وَلَكُمُ ٱلْبَنُونَ ﴿39﴾ أَمْ تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُم مِّن مَّغْرَمٍ مُّثْقَلُونَ ﴿40﴾ أَمْ
عِندَهُمُ ٱلْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿41﴾ أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿42﴾ أَمْ
لَهُمْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿43﴾

(29) So continue reminding for, by the grace of your Lord, you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] are neither a fortune-teller nor a madman. (30) Or do they say, "He is a poet whose death we are eagerly awaiting"? (31) Say, "Wait, for I am also waiting with you. (32) Or is their intelligence commanding them to do this or are they a rebellious nation? (33) Or are they saying, "He has fabricated it"? The fact of the matter is that they will not believe. (34) They should produce a speech like it if they are truthful. (35) Or were they created without a creator or are they creators themselves? (36) Or did they create the heavens and the earth? The fact is that they have no conviction. (37) Or are the treasures of your Lord with them or do they possess powers to enforce? (38) Or do they have a ladder by which they are able to eavesdrop? So let their eavesdropper produce a clear proof. (39) Or are daughters for Him and sons for you? (40) Or do you ask from them a fee so that they feel as if they are burdened by a penalty? (41) Or do they have knowledge of the unseen which they are writing? (42) Or are they plotting something? Indeed those who disbelieve will themselves be ensnared in a plot. (43) Or do they have a deity besides Allāh? Allāh is Pure from the partners they ascribe to Him.

REFUTING THE CLAIMS OF THE REJECTERS

These verses begin with an address to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم after which several questions are posed to the polytheists. The discussion therefore appears to be a dialogue between the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the polytheists.

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So continue reminding (and do not worry about the taunts of the disbelievers) for, by the grace of your Lord, you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] are neither a fortune-teller nor a madman (as they claim)."*

Allāh Ta'āla then quotes the foolish statement of the disbelievers who said about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"He is a poet whose death we are eagerly awaiting."* They claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was merely a poet and like so many other poets who have passed on, they (Allāh forbid!) will be relieved of him once he dies. They regarded him to be a poet who will have his

say as long as he lives and who will then be forgotten once he dies without a following. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to reply to them by saying, *"Wait, for I am also waiting with you"* i.e. *'I am waiting with you to see your miserable condition once Allāh's punishment afflicts you for turning away from the truth. Whereas I shall reap success and rewards for my efforts, you people will suffer failure, punishment and destruction."* The author of *'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that this verse refers to the defeat or the polytheists at the Battle of *Badr* when many polytheists leaders were killed.

Allāh Ta'āla then asks, *"Or is their intelligence commanding them to do this or are they a rebellious nation?"* Their intelligence seemed to be encouraging them to reject the truth and to cling to their false beliefs and customs. However, it is the duty of true intelligence to encourage acceptance of the truth and rejection of falsehood. It is therefore obvious that the intelligence that they valued so much was actually no intelligence at all.

Allāh says further, *"Or are they saying, 'He has fabricated it'?"* The polytheists claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fabricated the Qur'ān. They made this claim merely because of their obstinacy since even they realised that the Qur'ān can be nothing else but the word of Allāh. Allāh asserts, *"The fact of the matter is that they will not believe."* If they were true in their claim, why is it that they were unable to accept the challenge of the Qur'ān to produce a single Surah like any in the Qur'ān? Allāh says, *"They should produce a speech like it if they are truthful."* However, none shall- ever be able to meet the Qur'ān's challenge. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"Say, 'If mankind and the Jinn combine to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they would not be able to produce its example even if they are assistants to each other"'* [*Surah 17, verse 88*]. After almost 1500 years, none has been able to meet this challenge and none shall ever do so.

"Or were they created without a creator or are they creators themselves?" Even the polytheists are forced to admit that they are creation and that there is a Creator. If they deny that they were created, their existence will be questioned. They will then be asked whether they created themselves. It is obvious that neither did they create themselves not are they able to create another being. Once a person realises that he is a creation, he ought to believe in the existence of the Creator.

Allāh asks further, "Or did they create the heavens and the earth?" This question is rhetorical because it is obvious that these people could never create the heavens and the earth. They are therefore forced to admit that these phenomena are also the products of the Mighty Creator. However, despite admitting these facts, *"The fact is that they have no conviction."*

"Or are the treasures of your Lord with them..." If they possessed the treasures of Allāh's mercy, they could appoint whoever they please as Anbiya (The Holy Prophets) عليهم السلام*. However, they have no choice in the matter. Only Allāh may appoint a Prophet. This verse is a reply to the question that the polytheists posed as quoted in verse 31 of Surah Zukhruf (43), "They say, 'Why is this Qur'ān not revealed to a prominent man from one of the two cities (i.e. Makkah or Tā 'if)?"'*

Allāh asks further *"or do they possess powers to enforce?"* i.e. *"Do they wield the power to forcibly choose who a Prophet should be?"* Since the obvious replies to these questions are negative, it is evident that they then have no right to object to

Allāh's choice of Prophet's عليهم السلام. Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *"Allāh knows best where He wishes to place His message."* [*Surah 6, verse 124*]

"Or do they have a ladder by which they are able to eavesdrop? So let their eavesdropper produce a clear proof" i.e. they should produce a clear proof to substantiate the truth of their stand (Qurtubi). The fact that the Qur'ān is a revelation from Allāh is proven by the fact that no human is able to match even a single short Surah of the Qur'ān. It is now the responsibility of the disbelievers to prove the truth of their beliefs. Therefore, Allāh asks them whether they have a ladder to climb into the heavens in search of a suitable proof. They are challenged to furnish a divine proof just as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could recite the revelation that came to him.

"Or are daughters for Him and sons for you?" The polytheists regarded the angels as Allāh's daughters. However, when a daughter was born to any of them, they regarded it as a disgrace. A nation that attributes to Allāh something that they regard as a disgrace must really be a foolish nation. How can such a nation raise objections against Allāh and say that He ought to appoint those people as the Holy Prophets whom they select as such?

"Or do you ask from them a fee so that they feel as if they are burdened by a penalty?" No person is ever required to pay a fee for accepting Islām. In fact, people are invited to accept Islām for their personal benefit in this world and in the Ākhirah. Therefore no person can make the excuse that they stand to lose anything by accepting Islām.

Allāh then asks, *"Or do they have knowledge of the unseen which they are writing?"* They used to say that they are awaiting the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that his following and his religion may cease to exist after him. Allāh asks them whether they have knowledge of the unseen to be so certain that they will live on after him to see what they wish to see. [*Qurtubi*]

"Or are they plotting something? Indeed those who disbelieve will themselves be ensnared in a plot." The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* writes that this warning came to pass when the polytheists of Makkah convened to decide their course of action against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh mentions this meeting in Surah Anfāl when He says, *"When the disbelievers schemed against you to imprison you, kill you or exile you. They plan and Allāh plans, and Allāh is the best of planners."* [*Surah 8, verse 30*]

However, the evil scheming of the disbelievers was foiled because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left Makkah unharmed and reached Madinah safely. It was after he reached Madinah that the Battle of Badr took place in which seventy polytheists were killed, many of them being their leaders. Thus, they were at the receiving end of their plot. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 27 p. 39*]

Allāh closes the dialogue by asking, *"Or do they have a deity besides Allāh? Allāh is Pure from the partners they ascribe to Him."*

وَإِن يَرَوْا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ سَاقِطًا يَقُولُوا سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَذَرْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ

(44) If they see a portion of the sky hurtling down they say, "This is a cloud in stacked layers." (45) So leave them until they meet their day in which they will fall unconscious. (46) The day when their plots will be of no avail to them and they will not be assisted. (47) There shall surely be another punishment besides this for the oppressors but they have no idea. (48) Bear patiently with the decision of your Lord for you are under Our protection. Glorify the praises of your Lord when you rise. (49) And glorify Him during a portion of the night and even after the stars have vanished.

THE MISERABLE PLIGHT OF THE REJECTERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Allāh speaks of the rebelliousness of the disbelievers in these verses, He exhorts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be patient and promises him protection. In the first of these verses, Allāh describes the rebelliousness of the polytheists when He says, *"If they see a portion of the sky hurtling down (towards them) they say, 'this is a cloud in stacked layers."* This means that even if they have to witness Allāh's punishment coming to them in the form of a hurtling *"portion of the sky"* (meteorite, asteroid, etc), they will not want to believe. This is despite the fact that they said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"We shall never believe in you until you drop the sky upon us in fragments as you claim..."* [*Surah Bani Isrā'īl (17), verses 90-92*]

If, as they requested, a *"portion of the sky"* was to come hurtling towards them, they would refuse to admit that it is from Allāh and will brush it off as being a mere cloud that has layers stacked high atop each other. Like this, they will concoct various interpretations instead of admitting that it is from Allāh Ta'āla or a miracle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh discusses this rebelliousness of theirs in Surah Hijr where He says, *"If We open to them a door of the sky and they climb it during the day they will say, 'Our eyes have merely been mesmerized. Indeed we are a bewitched people."*[*Surah 15, verses 14,15*]

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *saying, "So leave them until they meet their day in which they will fall unconscious."* While some commentators are of the opinion that this day refers to the Battle of Badr, others maintain that it refers to the day when the trumpet will be sounded for the first time to announce the advent of Judgement. Allāh continues to say that on that fateful day, *"their plots will be of no avail to them and they will not be assisted."*

"There shall surely be another punishment besides this for the oppressors..." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that this punishment refers to the Battle of Badr and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the reference is to the seven-year drought that afflicted Makkah. However, *"they have no idea" that this warning is not merely an idle threat but a reality that is certain.*

Allāh Ta'āla advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further by saying, *"Bear patiently with the decision of your Lord"* i.e. *"bear with Allāh's decision to delay the punishment and do not seek to hasten it. They shall be punished when Allāh decrees. You have nothing to fear from them because "you are under Our protection."*

Allāh further instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Glorify the praises of your Lord when you rise."* Sayyidina Atā رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Ibn Jurayj رحمة الله عليه interpret this verse to mean that Tasbīh *(Words of glorifying)* and Tahmīd (*Words of praising*) should be recited each time one rises from a gathering. In this regard it has been reported that whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم rose from a gathering he used to recite:

With reference to this, a Sahābi رضى الله عنه asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. You are reciting certain words that you never recited habitually before." the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "These words serve as an expiation for everything (inappropriate) that occurred in the gathering." [*Abu Dawūd*]

Allāh further instructs, *"And glorify Him during a portion of the night and even after the stars have vanished."* While some commentators have interpreted *"during a portion of the night"* as the Maghrib and Isha Salāh and *"after the stars have vanished"* as the two Rakāhs of Fajr, others maintain that *"during a portion of the night"* refers to performing the Tahajjud Sahāh at night.

سورة النجم

Makkan	Surah An-Najm	Verses 62

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ (1) مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ (2) وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ (3) إِنْ هُوَ
إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ (4) عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ (5) ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَىٰ (6) وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَىٰ
(7) ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ (8) فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ (9) فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَىٰ
(10) مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ (11) أَفَتُمَارُونَهُ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ (12) وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ (13)
عِندَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنتَهَىٰ (14) عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ (15) إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ (16) مَا زَاغَ
الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ (17) لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَىٰ (18)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) By the star when it sets. (2) Your companion is neither deviated nor has he lost his way. (3) He does not speak of his own whims. (4) Whatever he says is revelation revealed to him. (5) He has been taught by one of immense might... (6) ... and who is extremely powerful. He then appeared in his original form... (7) ... when he was on the highest part of the horizon. (8) Then he approached and drew close... (9) ...and was as close as two bows or even closer. (10) Then (Allāh) sent that revelation to His slave, which He revealed. (11) The heart does not mistake what it sees. (12) Are you disputing with him concerning what he saw? (13) He certainly saw him once more... (14) ...at the "Sidratul Muntahā"... (15) ... close to which is "Jannatul Ma'wā". (16) When the "Sidratul Muntahā" is covered by that which covers it. (17) The sight neither wavered nor transgressed. (18) He definitely saw some of Allāh 's great signs.

EVERYTHING THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم SAID WAS REVELATION AND HE SAW SAYYIDINA JIBRĪL عليه السلام TWICE IN HIS ORIGINAL FORM

The greater portion of these verses speak about the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the incident where he saw Sayyidina Jibrīl عليه السلام.

Allāh begins the Surah by taking an oath saying, *"By the star when it sets. Your companion is neither deviated nor has he lost his way. He does not speak of his own whims. Whatever he says is revelation revealed to him."*

Although the Arabic word *"Najm" is* singular, it refers to the entire galaxy of stars. Certain commentators have mentioned that it refers to the Pleiades constellation of stars, which comprises of seven individual stars. Allāh swears an oath by the stars to emphasise prophethood and divine revelation because just as the stars serve to guide people in the dark, so too do the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام and divine revelation guide people who have wandered astray.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was never a polytheist. Even before he announced his prophethood to people, he always believed in One Allāh. However, when he began inviting the Quraysh to believe in One Allāh, they took offence and started saying that he had forsaken the creed of his forefathers and wandered astray. They even called him a fortune-teller and a poet. Allāh Ta'āla refutes their statements by declaring that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has never deviated, from the path of truth and whatever he preaches to people is absolutely true. Whatever he tells them is not figments of his imagination but truths of divine revelation that Allāh had revealed to him.

Because people find the right directions in the dark by using the stars as guides, Allāh takes an oath by the stars to emphasise that guidance may be had by following the teachings of the revelation that descends on their "companion" viz. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It was indeed unreasonable of the Quraysh to falsify the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when they knew him from his childhood and were well aware of the fact that he never spoke a lie to any soul. It was therefore impossible that he could ever lie about Allāh by saying that Allāh had made him a Prophet.

Allāh continues to say, *"He has been taught by one of immense might and who is extremely powerful."* This verse refers to Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام who brought revelation from Allāh Ta'āla to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh emphasises the fact that Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام is extremely powerful and strong so that none can think that perhaps a Satan or another creature may have waylaid him and prevented him from delivering the revelation as it should be delivered. Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام is so powerful that no creation has the ability to overpower him.

THE FIRST SIGHTING

"He then appeared in his original form when he was on the highest part of the horizon..." Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام usually appeared in the form of a human being when he brought revelation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. One day, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم requested to see Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام in his original form. Consequently, Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام appeared before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in his original form when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in the cave of Hira. According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him like this while he was in the Ajyād district of Makkah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام on the eastern horizon with his six hundred wings spread out. They were so large that they even covered the

western horizon. The sight was so tremendous that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fell unconscious.

When this happened, Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام immediately appeared in a human form, hurried to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and wiped the dust from his face. His hurrying to the aid of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is described as *"then (he) approached and drew close and was as close as two bows or even closer."* It was the custom of the Arabs that whenever they entered into a pact with each other, they used to hold the strings of their bows so close to each other that they touched. This was done to emphasise their unity and convince each other that they would now always stand together as one united force.

Allāh adds that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام were *"even closer"* than two bows. This alludes to the spiritual closeness that the two shared. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم regained consciousness, Allāh sent revelation to him. This is referred to by the verse *"Then (Allāh) sent that revelation to His slave, which He revealed."* Quoting from Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubayr رضى الله عنه, *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* mentions that this verse refers to the revelation of verse 6 of Surah Duhā (*Surah 93*) up to verse 4 of Surah Inshirā (*Surah 94*). Other commentators are of the opinion that the revelation transmitted to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was that none shall enter Heaven until he enters and that no Ummah shall enter Heaven until his Ummah enters.

"The heart does not mistake what it sees." i.e. whatever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw was certain and doubtless.

"Are you disputing with him concerning what he saw?" Allāh censures the polytheists for denying what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them he had seen, which was absolutely true.

THE SECOND SIGHTING

"He certainly saw him once more at the 'Sidratul Muntahā..." After seeing Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام in his original form in Makkah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him again in this form at the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went for Mi'rāj (*ascension*). Describing the *"Sidratul Muntahā"*, Allāh says, *"close to which is 'Jannatul Ma'wā'. When the 'Sidratul Muntahā' is covered by that which covers it."* The gardens of Heaven where people will abide in peace forever are in the vicinity of the *"Sidratul Muntahā"*. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw the *"Sidratul Muntahā"*, something most beautiful enshrouded it.

Allāh Ta'āla says further, *"The sight neither wavered nor transgressed."* i.e. when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw what was before him, his gaze remained fixed on it and he did not turn to the right or left. His gazes also did not fall on anything besides what he was being shown. Therefore, he was able to accurately recount exactly what he saw.

"He definitely saw some of Allāh 's great signs." Muslim (*v. 1 p. 98*) narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that *"Allāh 's great signs"* refers to the sighting of Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him at the "Sidratul Muntahā" with all his six hundred wings (just as he had seen

him once before on earth).

WHAT IS THE "SIDRATUL MUNTAHĀ"?

The Arabic word *"Sidrah"* means a lotus or a jujube tree. *'Muntahā"* means the *'limit'* or *'apex'* i.e. a point beyond which there is nothing more. The *"Sidratul Muntahā" is* therefore a tree at which everything stops. Whatever deeds ascend to the heavens first stop at the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* before proceeding further and all commands descending to earth also stop there before descending further. [*Qurtubi v. 9 p. 94*]

The books of Ahadīth contain detailed narrations concerning the epic journey of Mi'rāj (*ascension*). These narrations also speak of the *"Sidratul Muntahā"*. During the journey of Mi'rāj (*ascension*), the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم met several Anbiya (The Holy Prophets) عليهم السلام in the many heavens. After meeting Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, he proceeded to the *"Sidratul Muntahā*. The fruit of the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* were as large as the water jugs of Hijr and the leaves were the size of elephants' ears. According to one narration, the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* was covered by golden butterflies, while another narration states that it was enshrouded in magnificent colours, the beauty of which cannot be described. According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that when the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* was covered by that with which Allāh covered it, it took on a new appearance. When the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* was covered, it became so beautiful that none of Allāh's creation can describe its beauty. To highlight this indescribable beauty Allāh says, *"When the 'Sidratul Muntahā' is covered by that which covers it."*

WHAT IS "JANNATUL MA'WĀ"

The Arabic word *"Ma'wā"* literally refers to a *"place where one takes up residence"*. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has recorded the following interpretations of *"Jannatul Ma'wā"*.

1. The Heaven in which the Allāh-fearing people shall reside.
2. The place in paradise where the souls of the Shuhadā (martyrs) stay.
3. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه states that this is the place in Heaven where Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام is.
4. The place in Heaven where the souls of all the believers abide.
5. The place where Jibr'īl عليه السلام and Mika'īl عليه السلام stay. Allāh knows best.

NOTE: There exists a difference of opinion with regard to whether the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw Allāh in Mi'rāj (*ascension*) or not. There also exists a difference with regard to whether the sighting was with the physical eyes or with the heart (spiritual). Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها maintains that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did

not see Allāh, while Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه is of the opinion that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did see Allāh. Other Scholars hold the view that no comment should be made on the issue. They neither confirm nor deny whether the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم saw Allāh Ta'āla or not.

Sayyidina Masrūq رحمة الله علیه, who was a student of Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها, once asserted that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did see Allāh Ta'āla during the night of Mi'rāj (*ascension*) In support of this assertion, he quoted the verses:

"[The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم] undoubtedly saw him on the clear horizon." [*Surah Takwīr (81), verse 23*]

"He certainly saw him once more..." [*Surah Najm (53), verse 13*]

Upon this, Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها said, "I was the first person of this Ummah to ask the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم about this. He replied, 'I saw Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام only twice in his original form. "'[*Muslim v. 1 p. 98*]

When Sayyidina Masrūq رحمة الله علیه asked Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها about the verse: *"then'(he) approached and drew close. And was as close as two bows or even closer"* she replied that this referred to Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام. She added that Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام usually appeared before the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم in human form. When the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم saw him in his original form, he encompassed the entire horizon from east to west. [*Ibid*]

After discussing the issue in his commentary of Muslim, Imām Nawawi رحمة الله علیه states that the majority of Scholars share the opinion of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه.

However, an analysis of Ahadīth narrations on the subject and the verses of Surah Najm along with the pronouns mentioned, lead one to believe that these verses refer to seeing Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام. This fact is clearly apparent from the verses: "*. . . who is extremely powerful. He then appeared in his original form when he was on the highest part of the horizon. Then he approached and drew close and was as close as two bows or even closer.*"

Concerning the verse *"The heart does not mistake what it sees"* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه says that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم saw Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام with all his 600 wings [*muslim v. 1 p. 97*]. The pronoun *"him"* in the verse *"He certainly saw him once more" obviously refers to the one who was seen "on the highest part of the horizon"* and who then *"approached and drew close."*

When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه recited the verse, *"He definitely saw some of Allāh 's great signs"* he stated that this referred to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم seeing Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام in his true form with 600 wings. When Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضی الله عنه recited the verse *"He certainly saw him once more"* he commented that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم saw Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام *(Muslim v. 1 p. 98)*. Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها also mentioned that the verses of Surah Najm refer to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم seeing Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام and not Allāh Ta'āla.

In support of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās's رضی الله عنه opinion, Imām

Nawawi رحمة الله عليه states that it appears as if Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه heard this from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This statement is questionable because the narration of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها is quoted from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself, as she stated. According to her narration, it is clear that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself mentioned that Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام is referred to in the verse *"He certainly saw him once more"*. The statement of Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه therefore seems to be based purely on his good opinion of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. Furthermore, the opinion of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw Allāh Ta'āla with the eyes of his heart and not with his physical eyes. (*Muslim v. 1 p. 98*)

If one has to reflect deeper, one will realise that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sighting of Allāh cannot be conclusively proven from these Qur'ānic verses nor from the narrations of Ahadīth. The third opinion therefore seems most appropriate i.e. no comment should be made on the issue - neither can one confirm nor deny whether the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw Allāh Ta'āla or not. A detailed discussion appears in *v. 8 p. 608* of "Fat'hul Bāri".

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱللَّٰتَ وَٱلْعُزَّىٰ ﴿19﴾ وَمَنَوٰةَ ٱلثَّالِثَةَ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰٓ ﴿20﴾ أَلَكُمُ ٱلذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿21﴾
تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰٓ ﴿22﴾ إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّآ أَسْمَآءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا
مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى ٱلْأَنفُسُ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مِّن رَّبِّهِمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ
﴿23﴾ أَمْ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ مَا تَمَنَّىٰ ﴿24﴾ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ وَٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿25﴾ ۞ وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
لَا تُغْنِى شَفَٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن يَأْذَنَ ٱللَّهُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَرْضَىٰٓ ﴿26﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿27﴾ وَمَا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا
ٱلظَّنَّ ۖ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ شَيْـًٔا ﴿28﴾

(19) Have you seen Lāt and Uzza... (20) ... and the third one Manāt? (21) Are males for you and females for Him? (22) This is certainly an unjust distribution. (23) These are merely names which you and your forefathers have kept, for which Allāh has not revealed any warrant. They follow only assumptions and what their whims fancy whereas guidance has already come to them from their Lord. (24) Should man have whatever he wishes for? (25) The Hereafter and the world are only for Allāh. (26) How many are the angels in the heavens whose intercession shall be of no avail except after Allāh grants per duty for whoever He wills and is pleased. (27) Indeed those who do not believe in the Hereafter give feminine names to the angels... (28)... without possessing any knowledge. They follow only assumptions and assumptions are absolutely useless against the truth.

THE IDOLS OF THE ARAB POLYTHEISTS

Before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced his prophethood, the Arabs, including the people of Makkah worshipped idols. The people of Makkah were all from the progeny of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Ismā'īl عليه السلام. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made Supplication to Allāh saying, *"safeguard my children and myself from worshipping idols."* Therefore, for a long period of time, the people of his progeny were all sincere believers in One Allāh. Gradually, with the influence of other Arab tribes, the people of Makkah also became idol-worshippers. The Arabs worshipped several idols which they carved from various materials. Three of these idols were the most famous and are mentioned in the above verses. They were *"Lāt"*, *"Manāt"* and *"Uzza*.

WHO WERE "LĀT", "MANĀT" AND "UZZA"?

"Fat'hul Bāri" quotes from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that *"Lāt"* was a person from Tā'if. This opinion is most accurate even though other commentators maintain that he was from Maqām Nakhla or Ukāz. The name *"Lāt"* is derived from the verbs *"Latta"* and *"Yaluttu"*. Lāt lived in the vicinity of Tā'if and owned some goats. Whenever a traveller passed, he used the milk of the goats to prepare a meal called *"Herrera"* which he fed to the travellers. He also gave them a thick beverage made of crushed barley to drink. Every person to whom he fed this meal grew in size. Legend has it that his real name was Āmir bin Zarb and that he also acted as judge among the Arabs. When he died, a person called Amr bin Luhay told the people that *"Lāt"* did not really die but had entered into a rock. The people began worshipping this rock and built a mausoleum above it. [*"Fat'hul Bāri" v. 8 p. 612*]

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that *"Uzza"* was a white rock that was situated in Batn Nakhla. A person by name of Zālim bin As'ad started worshipping *"Uzza"* and people eventually built a place of worship there. It is reputed that a voice used to emerge from here. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has stated that *"Uzza"* was a female Satan who used to frequently visit three acacia trees in Batn Nakhla.

Another idol to which the polytheists of Makkah used to attach great significance was "Hubal". When the polytheists gained victory at Uhud, their leader Abu Sufyān shouted, *"May Hubal be exalted!"* Upon the instruction of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his companions رضى الله عنهم replied, *"Allāh is Most Exalted and Greater!"* Thereupon Abu Sufyān cried out, *"We have Uzza while you have no Uzza!"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told his companions رضى الله عنهم to reply by saying, *"Allāh is our Wali (Protecting Friend) while you have no Protecting Friend!"* Polytheism *(shirk)* tends to make people so foolish that they actually elevate their idols above Allāh even though they have faith in Allāh. [*Tafsīr Qurtubi v. 17 p. 99,100*]

The third idol mentioned in the verse is *'Manāt"*. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that the name *"Manāt"* was adopted for this idol because the people believed that they could attain nearness to Allāh by sacrificing animals near *"Manāt"*. *'Manāt"* was an idol of the Banu Hudhayl and Banu Khuzā'ah tribes. *'Manāt"* was worshipped at a place called Mushallal, which is near Qudayd and

lies near the road leading from Makkah to Madinah (closer to Makkah).

It is stated in *"Fat'hul Bāri"* that Amr bin Luhay stationed *'Manāt"* close to the sea at Qudayd. The Azd and Ghassān tribes used to perform Hajj here and greatly revered here. After perform Hajj at the Ka'ba, returning from Arafāt and completing their rites at Mina, these people used to adorn another Ihrām to perform Hajj for *'Manāt"*.

It is because the Arabs attached such great importance to these three idols that Allāh has mentioned them in the Qur'ān by saying, *"Have you seen Lāt and Uzza and the third one Manāt?" i.e.* have you not seen that these idols neither have power to benefit nor to harm. Therefore, how can they be worshipped?

LĀT IS DESTROYED

The Banu Thaqīf tribe lived in Tā'if where Lāt was stationed. When this tribe accepted Islām, because they were still new to Islām, they requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to allow Lāt to remain standing for three years. However, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not permit this and sent Sayyidina Abu Sufyān bin Harb رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Mughiera bin Shu'ba رضى الله عنه to demolish Lāt. After accepting Islām, the people of Tā'if told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they were unable to bring themselves to demolish Lāt and that they preferred not being asked to perform Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that he could understand their reluctance to demolish Lāt and that they would not have to do it themselves. However, concerning the issue of Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to them, *"There is no good in any religion that is devoid of Salāh."* They were therefore constrained to perform Salāh. [*"Sīrah of Ibn Hishām" Chapter on the Thaqīf delegation and their conversion to Islām*]

THE DEMOLITION OF UZZA

It is recorded in *"Fat'hul Bāri"* (*v. 8 p. 612*) that when the Muslims conquered Makkah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه to destroy Uzza. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that Uzza was a female Satan who frequently visited three acacia trees in Batn Nakhla. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه with the instruction to cut down the first of the three trees. When Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه returned, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he saw anything. When Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه replied in the negative, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent him to cut down the second tree. After he had completed this task, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم posed the same question to him. When he again submitted that he had seen nothing, he was sent to cut down the third tree.

When Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه cut the third tree, he noticed a dark skinned woman with dishevelled hair clasping her shoulders and baring sharp fangs. Behind her was her attendant called Dubayya. Striking her on her head, Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه killed her and then killed her attendant. When he related the entire episode to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"That was Uzza. She will never be worshipped again."* [*Tafsīr Qurtubi v. 9 p. 100*]

"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" (*v. 4 p. 316*) reports that when Sayyidina Khālid bin

Walīd رضى الله عنه reached the place he saw a naked woman sitting. Her hair was dishevelled and she was throwing sand on her head. He drew his sword and executed her. When he reported this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"That woman was Uzza."*

A contradiction? Whereas it was stated earlier that Uzza was a white rock, it now appears that she was a Satan woman (?). It should be understood that the Satan used to (and still do) terrify the polytheists by appearing in various frightening forms. The Polytheists then make idols in these forms and begin worshipping them. These Satan regard this as homage to themselves and thus begin to reside at the places where the Polytheists worship their idols. They often appear before the Polytheists while they are awake as well as in their dreams.

THE DESTRUCTION OF MANĀT

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes (*v. 4 p. 454)* that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched Sayyidina Abu Sufyān bin Harb رضى الله عنه to destroy Manāt. Another narration mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم delegated the task to Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه.

There were many other idols that the Arabs worshipped besides these. Among the famous ones were Dhil Khalsā, which was known as the Ka'ba of Yemen and was worshipped by the Douws and Khat'am tribes. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Jarīr bin Abdullāh Bajali رضى الله عنه to destroy it.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE POLYTHEISTS

After highlighting the helplessness of idols, Allāh asks, *"Are males for you and females for Him?"* Not only were the polytheists foolish enough to ascribe children to Allāh, they ascribed such children to Him which they regarded as disgraceful i.e. daughters. They held the belief that the angels were the daughters of Allāh whereas if they were given the choice of children they would chose sons. In this regard Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl [*Surah 17, verse 40*], *"Has your Lord chosen sons only for you and taken the angels as His daughters? You are surely making a preposterous statement."*

Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt [*Surah 37, verses 149-155*], *"Ask them, 'Should your Lord have daughters, while you have sons? Or have We created the angels as females in their presence? Behold! Because of their concocted beliefs, they will certainly say, 'Allāh has children.' Undoubtedly, they are liars! Has Allāh chosen daughters instead of sons? What ails you people? How do you decide? Do you not take heed?"*

Allāh says in Surah Nahl [*Surah 16, verses 57-59*], *"They assign daughters unto Allāh. Allāh is Pure! Yet they have for themselves what they desire? When any of them is given the glad tidings of a daughter, his face darkens and he suppresses his fury. He hides from the people because of the evil tidings that he received. Must he keep her with disgrace or bury her in the sand? Evil indeed is the decision that he takes!"*

It is with reference to wanting sons for themselves and daughters for Allāh that Allāh says, *"This is certainly an unjust distribution."*

THE POLYTHEISTS FABRICATED THEIR IDOLS AND THEIR NAMES

Allāh says about the idols of the polytheists, *"These are merely names which you and your forefathers have kept, for which Allāh has not revealed any warrant."* The objects that the polytheists adopted as their deities never deserved to be worshipped and could never have been sanctioned by Allāh. *"They follow only assumptions and what their whims fancy whereas guidance has already come to them from their Lord."* The polytheists and their pagan forefathers did as they pleased and chose whatever they wanted to worship. This was despite the fact that they had received guidance from Allāh previously. Their behaviour was therefore purely obstinate. The *"guidance"* mentioned in the verse refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān. Allāh's Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and His Qur'ān made it clear to them that there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh and presented numerous proofs to them. However, they still refused to accept.

Allāh states further, *"Should man have whatever he wishes for?"* This verse tells us that man can never have whatever he desires in this world. The polytheists entertained the hope that their idols would grant them whatever they desired in this world and would intercede on their behalf on the Day of Judgement. These were merely false hopes. Whereas a man cannot accomplish whatever he wants in this world even by exerting himself greatly, how can he hope that helpless idols can fulfil his desires?

"The Hereafter and the world are only for Allāh." This means that Allāh has complete control over the affairs of this world and the Ākhirah (Hereafter). Neither the polytheists nor their idols have any say in these affairs. Therefore, it is only Allāh who can be of assistance to people in both worlds and He can easily destroy all their hopes.

THE POLYTHEISTS BELIEVED THAT THEIR IDOLS WILL INTERCEDE ON THEIR BEHALF ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

The polytheists believed that their idols and the angels whom they worshipped would intercede on their behalf on the Day of Judgement. Satan made them believe that the intercession of their idols would draw them close to Allāh. The Qur'ān explains to them that their idols are unable to do anything for themselves, let alone save the polytheists. Besides being unable to assist others, idols are lifeless and cannot even protect themselves from others. Whereas the Prophet's عليهم السلام and the angels are able to intercede on behalf of others, they will be unable to do so if they do not receive Allāh's per duty to intercede. Allāh refers to this when He says, *"How many are the angels in the heavens whose intercession shall be of no avail except after Allāh grants per duty for whoever He wills and is pleased with."*

Therefore, Allāh will allow His pious creation to intercede on behalf of only those people with whom He is pleased. There is therefore no hope of Allāh granting per duty for anyone to intercede on behalf of the disbelievers and polytheists. In Surah Anbiya [*Surah 21, verses 26-28*], Allāh refutes the beliefs and actions of those people who worship the angels and who believe that they are

Allāh's children. Allāh says, *"They say, 'Rahmān has taken a son.' He is Pure! They (the angels) are but honourable slaves. They do not speak ahead of Him and duly carry out His orders. He knows what is before them and what is behind them and only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede. They tremble with fear for Him."*

Allāh states further, *"Indeed those who do not believe in the Hereafter give feminine names to the angels without possessing any knowledge."* The polytheists held incorrect beliefs and carried out evil deeds because they did not believe in the Ākhirah (Hereafter). If they believed in the Ākhirah and were concerned about answering to Allāh, they would never have called the angels Allāh's daughters. It is this lack of belief in the Ākhirah that is referred to when Allāh says, *"without possessing any knowledge"*. Without any proof or reason, they took the liberty to make gods for themselves. Allāh says, *"They follow only assumptions and assumptions are absolutely useless against the truth."* Their first assumption was believing that their idols were worthy of worship and the second was believing that these idols would intercede for them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).*

THE NECESSITY FOR BELIEF IN AND CONCERN FOR THE ĀKHIRAH

The verse *"Indeed those who do not believe in the Hereafter..."* makes reference to an extremely fundamental factor. It tell us that people who do not believe in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* tend to get involved in polytheism *(shirk)*. Disbelieving in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is a major cause for not only committing disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*, but for remaining steadfast in these practices. If a polytheist does believe in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, his belief is generally very hazy and he is easily convinced by others to believe that his idols will intercede for him on the Day of Judgement and save him from Hell. In this manner, even the little fear he has for the Ākhirah vanishes from his heart.

Besides the polytheists, there are many other types of disbelievers. There are the atheists who believe that there is no god at all and that they have no creator. Consequently, they do not believe in resurrection and life after death. Since they do not believe in any god, they believe that there is no one to answer to after death.

There are others who believe in a God and accept that they have a Creator. However, they ascribe partners to Allāh and believe in reincarnation. Therefore, these people do not believe in resurrection, rewards and punishment.

Another group affiliate themselves to a Prophet, like the Jews and the Christians. Compared to the other groups of disbelievers, they have a much greater concept of Ākhirah. However, their obstinacy has destroyed them. They refuse to believe in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and have gradually lost the fear of the Ākhirah. The Jews have become so indifferent to the Ākhirah that they claim, *"The Fire will touch us only for a limited number of days"* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 80*]. Despite knowing that they are unable to place their hands in the fire of this world for a minute, they are audacious enough to claim that they will tolerate a few days in the intensified fire of Hell rather than believing in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Although the Christians believe in the Ākhirah, they have fallen prey to the

false preaching of their religious leaders. They have been told that they are at liberty to do whatever they please during the week because they can confess to the priest on sundays and have all their sins forgiven. They even believe that there is no need to confess to all their sins because his forgiveness will be good for every sin. As a result of this foolish behaviour, they have also become oblivious of the Ākhirah.

This gross indifference has made their once blurry concept of punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* fade into extinction. As a result, they are immersed in disbelief, polytheism *(shirk)* and major sins.

THE NECESSITY FOR PEOPLE TO BE CONCERNED WITH SAVING THEMSELVES FROM PUNISHMENT IN THE ĀKHIRAH

It is tragic to note that many people have no concern for their lives after death and scarcely have an idea that Allāh has revealed a Religion by which they can be saved from punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. This concern and belief in the Ākhirah are essential for a person. If a person believes that he will have to suffer punishment in the Ākhirah if he dies as a disbeliever, he will be unable to rest or find taste in food until he finds the Dīn *(religion)* that Allāh has sent for man's salvation. If a person truly has a concern, Insha Allāh he will certainly be convinced that the only Dīn *(religion)* acceptable to Allāh is the religion of Islām. He will then not be led astray by any religious leader and will be able to make it clear to them that they are merely leading people into the fire of Hell.

It is actually the combination of three factors that have prepared people to enter Hell. These are (1) weak belief in the Ākhirah (Hereafter), (2) following human whims and passions and (3) fabricating their own religions based purely on personal speculation. There are also many people who are Muslims, who believe in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* but are unable to resist their whims and temptations. They are given to forsaking Salāh, not paying Zakāh, earning a living by Unlawful sources, consuming Unlawful food and committing all sorts of sins. Such people are also preparing themselves for punishment in Hell. Indifference towards the Ākhirah and following their whims have weakened them to the extent that they are unable to desist from sin.

THE STATUS OF MAN'S ASSUMPTIONS

Allāh Ta'āla expresses the status of man's assumptions by stating, *"assumptions are absolutely useless against the truth".* This verse is a lesson for those people who pitch their logic and rationale against the clear statements of the Qur'ān and Ahadīth by voicing their *"opinions"* which contradict the Qur'ān and Ahadīth.

There are also many who think ill of others and these evil assumptions of others lead them to backbiting and slander. Such people should be concerned that the evil assumptions they have of others must not disgrace them in this world and cause them to suffer in Hell. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Beware of assumptions because the worst lie is an assumption."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 427 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿29﴾ ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ ﴿30﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَيَجْزِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ بِٱلْحُسْنَى ﴿31﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَٰسِعُ ٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ
أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِى بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تُزَكُّوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰٓ ﴿32﴾

(29) So ignore him who turns away from Our advice and who desires only the life of this world. (30) This is the extent of their knowledge. Verily your Lord knows best about the person who deviated from His path and He knows best about him who is rightly guided. (31) To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth so that He may punish the evil-doers for their deeds and reward those who do good with the best. (32) (They are) those who stay away from major sins and indecent acts except for minor sins. Indeed your Lord is One of extensive mercy. He was best Aware of you when He created you from the earth and when you were foetuses in the wombs of your mothers. So do not ascribe purity to yourselves. He knows best who is the most pious.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF WORLDLY PEOPLE IS LIMITED AND ALLĀH KNOWS THE DEVIATED FROM THE RIGHTLY GUIDED

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"So ignore him who turns away from Our advice" i.e.* do not hanker after him and do not be grieved by his deeds. Your duty is to convey the message and those who reject will have to suffer the consequences of their rejection. Allāh further describes the person who rejects the advice of the Qur'ān as one *"who desires only the life of this world."* Every aspect of such a person's life revolves around this world. He earns to live and lives to earn.

Regarding the people of this world, Allāh says further, *"This is the extent of their knowledge."* The purpose of the progress that they make in this world and the degrees they attain is to gain only the material possessions of this world. All their thoughts and mental energies are restricted to attaining this same objective. Allāh says in Surah Rūm, *"They have superficial knowledge of the life of this world, whereas they are negligent of the Hereafter."* [*Surah 30, verse 7*]

Love for this world prevents people from belief and even those who have Belief grow increasingly negligent of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* as they take a deeper interest in this world. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who loves his world will damage his Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* and the person who loves his Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* will damage his world. So chose that which is everlasting above that which is temporary" [*"Mishkāt" p. 441*]. Giving preference

to the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* over this world is a sign of intelligence. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Love for this world is the source of every sin. [*"Mishkāt" p. 444*]

One of the supplications that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always made was:

> {**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! Do not place any difficulties in our religion and do not make the world our greatest concern and the extent of our knowledge."} [*"Mishkāt" p. 219*]

Allāh continues to say, *"Verily your Lord knows best about the person who deviated from His path and He knows best about him who is rightly guided."* Allāh is best Aware of the deeds and conditions of either group and shall reward or punish them accordingly.

THE GOOD AND EVIL DOERS WILL GET WHAT THEY DESERVE

"To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth." Allāh created everything in the universe including man. Among men two groups emerged, those who do good and those who do evil. According to their deeds, the good will be rewarded and the evil will be punished. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"so that He may punish the evil-doers for their deeds and reward those who do good with the best."*

Allāh then describes those who do good as *"those who stay away from major sins and indecent acts except for minor sins."* Allāh states that just as these people are particular about carrying out good deeds and adorning themselves with noble characters and personalities, they also ensure that they stay away from sin and evil. The person who carries out good deeds but is not particular about refraining from evil cannot be described as one with perfect Belief. Perfect Belief entails carrying out whatever Allāh commands and staying away from everything that He forbids. A person can regard himself as *"those who do good"* only when he fulfils these two prerequisites.

There are many people who do a great deal of good deeds including many Nafl (optional good deeds). However, they fail to refrain from sins. It must be borne in mind that abstaining from sin is a great form of Ibādah (worship) in itself. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Refrain from sin and you will become the greatest worshipper"* [*"Mishkāt" p. 440*]. It is evident that carrying out a good deed is much easier than refraining from a sin. Many people do not regard abstaining from sin as an act of virtue whereas the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has described it as the greatest form of worship. Together with carrying out good deeds, one must make a special effort to stop committing the sins that one is accustomed to.

The above verse makes reference to major sins as well. The details regarding the description and examples of major sins have been given in the commentary of the verse: *"From all the things forbidden to you, if you refrain from the major sins, We shall expiate from you your evil deeds and enter you into a place of honour."* [*Surah Nisā (4), verse 31*]

In addition to refraining from major sins, *"those who do good"* also stay away

from *"indecent acts"*. Although indecent acts are regarded as *"major sins"*, they are mentioned separately so that people exercise extra caution to stay away from all major sins that involve indecent behaviour. The Arabic word *"Fawāhish"* (translated above as *"indecent acts"*) entails all acts that men and women engage in which are indecent in any way.

Allāh says that the people who *"do good"* abstain from all types of sin but, being human, they sometimes succumb to the temptation of committing minor sins. These sins do not exclude them from the category of *"those who do good"*. Nevertheless, because their frame of mind is one of religiousness and because they fear Allāh, they do not find solace after committing a sin until they sincerely repent to Allāh. In addition to this, they take care not to ever repeat the sin. It should also be borne in mind that minor sins are forgiven once a person carries out good deeds, as Allāh states in Surah Hūd [Surah 11, verse 114], *"Verily good deeds obliterate evil deeds."*

The author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* states that the exception (i.e. *except for minor sins*) means that although a person needs to refrain from major sins to be regarded as *"those who do good"*, committing minor sins occasionally will not disqualify him from belonging to this group of praiseworthy people. However, persistently committing such sins will certainly disqualify him from this group. He stresses that this verse neither sanctions committing minor sins nor does it mean that a person will be rewarded for good deeds only if he abstains from major sins. Verse 7 of Surah Zilzāl (*Surah 99*) makes it clear that a believer will be rewarded for every good deed even without the precondition of abstaining from major sins. However, committing major sins will exclude one from being included in the illustrious group of people who *"do good"* and who will be rewarded tremendously.

It is vitally important to reiterate the warning that the verse does not sanction minor sins. Although such sins are termed as *"minor"* and they can be forgiven by carrying out good deeds, they can never be sanctioned because they will then cease to be sins at all. The term "minor" is relative and is used only because these sins are of a lesser degree than others which are termed *"major"*. Both are sins nonetheless.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said to her, "O Ayshah! Beware of the (seemingly) insignificant sins because Allāh has appointed someone to be vigilant of them (i.e. the angels whom Allāh has appointed to record sins are writing them down and one could well be questioned concerning them)." [*"Mishkāt" p. 485 from Ibn Mājah, Dārmi and Bayhaqi*]

"Indeed your Lord is One of extensive mercy." People who commit sins should never grow despondent and think that they have no option but to suffer punishment. They should never lose sight of the fact that Allāh's mercy is vast and all encompassing. They should repent for their sins, repair the wrong they did to others and try their utmost never to repeat the sin. This is all that is needed for Allāh's mercy to engulf the sinner. Of course, Allāh reserves the right to forgive people without repentance but disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)* will not be forgiven.

"He was best Aware of you when He created you from the earth and when you

were foetuses in the wombs of your mothers." The first man was created from the earth after which people have procreated to give birth to later generations. Allāh was keeping track of every individual's progress from the inception of man and from the time that every individual was passing through the various stages of development in his mother's womb. Nothing is hidden from Allāh.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST PROCLAIMING ONE'S PIETY

Allāh declares, *"So do not ascribe purity to yourselves. He knows best who is the most pious."* Allāh knows best who are the people who abstain from disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*. Even before people were born Allāh was Aware of their identities and the deeds they were destined to carry out. He knew exactly whether they would be carrying out good deeds and what deficiencies may exist in these deeds. Allāh will therefore either reward or punish people according to the deeds they carry out. It is foolish of a person to go about telling people about the many fasts that he observes, about the many Rakāhs of Salāh that he performs, about the many times that he performed Hajj, etc. Even though he may have carried out all these acts of Ibādah, no person is capable of worshipping Allāh as He deserves to be worshipped. Therefore, there will always be some deficiency in a person's Ibādah (*worship*), even though he fails to realise it. Since one's acts of Ibādah are fraught with faults, one is not justified in boasting about these.

The above verse prohibits:

- *Praising oneself.*
- *Lauding one's actions.*
- *Telling others of one's good deeds so that they revere and patronise one.*
- *Boasting about one's deeds.*

In fact, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم disliked people to keep names which proclaimed their piety. Sayyidah Zaynab bint Abu Salamah رضى الله عنها narrates that her name used to be Barra (meaning virtuous/pious) but the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed her name to Zaynab saying, *"Do not proclaim your own piety (i.e. do not call yourself pious) because only Allāh knows who of you are pious."* [*Muslim v. 2 p. 208*]

This hadith means that when a person keeps such a name and is asked *"Who are you?"*, their reply will be "I *am pious (Barra).*" This appears to be self-praise, which is prohibited. Just as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed the name Barra to Zaynab, he also changed the name of another girl from Āsiya (sinner) to Jamīla (beautiful). [*Muslim*]

This teaches us that just as one should not adopt a name or title that exudes self-praise, the name should also not portray sin and vice. Although a believer should be pious he should not go about proclaiming his piety to others. At the same time, he is susceptible to sins and should make Tauba (*repentence*) to secure forgiveness for these sins. He must therefore never adopt a name or title that indicates sinfulness. There are many people who, because of humility, call themselves *"Al Abdul Āsy"* (*"The sinful slave"*) or *"Āsy pur Ma'āsy"* (*"The sinner*

who is full of sin"). Adopting such titles contradicts the explicit instructions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

أَفَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى تَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَأَعْطَىٰ قَلِيلًا وَأَكْدَىٰٓ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَعِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ يَرَىٰٓ ﴿٣٥﴾ أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِى صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَلَّا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُۥ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ ثُمَّ يُجْزَىٰهُ ٱلْجَزَآءَ ٱلْأَوْفَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾ وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا ﴿٤٤﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ خَلَقَ ٱلزَّوْجَيْنِ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَأَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلنَّشْأَةَ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَغْنَىٰ وَأَقْنَىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلشِّعْرَىٰ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥٓ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَثَمُودَا۟ فَمَآ أَبْقَىٰ ﴿٥١﴾ وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ هُمْ أَظْلَمَ وَأَطْغَىٰ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَٱلْمُؤْتَفِكَةَ أَهْوَىٰ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَغَشَّىٰهَا مَا غَشَّىٰ ﴿٥٤﴾

(33) Have you seen him who turns away? (34) Who gives a little and then stops? (35) Does he have knowledge of the unseen which he can see? (36) Has he not been informed of what appeared in the scriptures of Mūsa? (37) And in the scriptures of Ibrahīm who fulfilled? (38) That one bearer shall not be burdened with the burden of another. (39) Man shall have only that for which he strives... (40) .... and his efforts shall soon be seen... (41) .... after which he will be given retribution in full. (42) The end shall surely be to your Lord. (43) It is certainly He (Allāh) Who makes (people) laugh and cry. (44) It is only He Who gives death and life. (45) Verily it is only He Who created pairs of male and female... 46) ... .from the seed when it issues forth. (47) The second creation is undoubtedly His responsibility. (48) Verily He grants affluence and poverty. (49) And He is the Lord of Sirius. (50) He destroyed the former Ād... (51) .... and the Thamūd so that none remained. (52) And (He destroyed) the people of Nūh before, who were most tyrannical and rebellious. (53) He also threw down the overturned cities. (54) So that thing engulfed them which did.

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE DISBELIEVERS THAT ONE SOUL WILL BE ABLE TO ASSIST ANOTHER ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (v. 27 p. 65) reports that Walīd bin Mughiera was impressed by the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم recitation of the Qur'ān and started drawing closer to Islām. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entertained great hope that he would accept Islām. However, a polytheist began teasing him and told him, *"Are you leaving the religion of your forefathers ? You think that if you die without accepting the religion of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, you will suffer punishment after death. Let us do this. Return to your religion and I will bear the punishment you are due to receive. However, there is a price attached to this."* He fixed a price which Walīd agreed to

pay. Walīd therefore lost all interest in embracing Islām. However, Walīd had not yet paid the entire amount when miserliness got the better of him and he stopped paying the man the promised amount. It was with reference to this incident that Allāh revealed the above verses.

"Have you seen him who turns away? Who gives a little and then stops? Does he have knowledge of the unseen which he can see?" i.e. he does not know whether one person will be allowed to bear the punishment of another. In fact, this will not be permitted in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. The polytheists merely fabricated the concept of one person bearing the brunt of another person's sins.

"Has he not been informed of what appeared in the scriptures of Mūsa? And in the scriptures of Ibrahīm who fulfilled? That one bearer shall not be burdened with the burden of another. And that man shall have only that for which he strives. And that his efforts shall soon be seen, after which he will be given retribution in full." While the Arab polytheists were the progeny of Sayyidina Ismā'īl عليه السلام [the son of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام], the Jews of Madinah followed the religion of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Because it was these two groups who disputed with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh Ta'āla refers to the scriptures revealed to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Allāh asks them whether they had read in these scriptures that no soul shall bear the burden of another.

Every person will have to suffer the punishment for his disbelief. In fact, none will even be prepared to bear another's burden of sin. The believer will see the rewards of his belief while the disbeliever will have to suffer the punishment for his disbelief. It is Allāh's law that no person will be allowed to bear the burden of another person's sins even though they may strike a deal to this effect in the world. Their pacts in this world that contradict Allāh's law hold no weight. Each will have to suffer for his own wrong. Details of this subject have passed in the commentary of verses 12 and 13 of Surah Ankabūt (*Surah 29*).

Allāh says that *"man shall have only that for which he strives."* This verse seems to refute the common concept of *'Isāl Thawāb"* i.e. carrying out good deeds and conferring the reward on the deceased. In reply to this dilemma, some Scholars have mentioned that the verse refers to the belief of one person, which will not benefit a second person in the Ākhirah (Hereafter). A believer can therefore not confer his belief on a disbeliever. It is for this reason that verse 21 of Surah Tūr *(52)* contains the clause *"follow them in belief"* when Allāh mentions:

"Those who carry out good deeds and whose progeny follow them in belief We shall join their progeny with them without reducing anything from their deeds."

Other Scholars have replied to this by saying that the verse contains a general rule that has a few exceptions. Among these exceptions is Hajj Badal, which is Hajj made on behalf of another person. The Ahadīth mention that a person receives the reward for a Hajj Badal when it is made on his behalf even though he did not perform it personally. Another exception is Sadaqah (charity), the reward of which will reach the soul of a dead person when it is given on his/her behalf. When one recites Qur'ān or makes Dhikr on behalf of another person without getting paid for it, the rewards for this will reach the deceased according to the Hanafi and Hanbali schools of jurisprudence. However,

according to the Shāfi'ī and Māliki schools of jurisprudence, physical acts of worship cannot be conferred on anyone. The rewards for these Ibādāt (plural of Ibādah) will accrue only to the person who carries them out. The scholars of the Hanafi and Hanbali schools of jurisprudence base this deduction on Hajj Badal and Sadaqah mentioned in the Ahadīth.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the generality of this verse ("man shall have only that for which he strives") has been revoked by the verse: *"Those who carry out good deeds and whose progeny follow them in belief We shall join their progeny with them without reducing anything from their deeds."* [*Surah Tūr*(52), *verse 21*] This verse of Surah Tūr denotes that people will even benefit from the belief of their forebears.

It is recorded in *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* that the governor of Khurasān once asked Sayyidina Husain bin Fadhl رحمة الله عليه about the apparent disparity between the verse *"Allah gives increased manifold to those whom He wills"* and the verse *"man shall have only that for which he strives"*. In reply to this question, Sayyidina Husain bin Fadhl رحمة الله عليه said, *"The verse of Surah Najm ("man shall have only that for which he strives ") mentions Allāh's "Adl" (justice). A person will therefore definitely receive the reward for his deeds in proportion to the worth of the deed. He shall receive what is his right and the reward cannot be lost to him. On the other hand, the verse "Allah gives increased manifold to those whom He wills" mentions Allāh's "Fadhl"(generosity). Allāh therefore has the option of granting people even more than they deserve."* The governor of Khurasān was so pleased with this reply that he kissed the forehead of Sayyidina Husain bin Fadhl رحمة الله عليه. *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* mentions that Sayyidina Ibn Atiyya رحمة الله عليه also made the same interpretation.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that the verse *"man shall have only that for which he strives"* applies only to sins because Allāh shall multiply the rewards of good deeds many times over as mentioned in the Ahadīth. Therefore, the verse *"Allah gives increased manifold to those whom He wills"* refers to the multiplied rewards that Allāh shall grant people for their good deeds. As for sins, Allāh shall punish people only to the extent of the sin. The punishment for sins will not be multiplied.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" quotes from Sayyidina Ikrima رحمة الله عليه that the verse of Surah Najm applies only to the people of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and was recorded in their scripture. They received rewards only for the deeds that they carried out personally. However, Allāh has granted the privilege to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they are able to carry out good deeds on behalf of others. Of course, the supplication of the previous Ummahs for each other used to be accepted. An example of this is the supplication that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام made for himself, for his parents and for all the believers of his time as recorded in verse 28 of Surah Nūh (*Surah 71*). Another example is the supplication that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام made for himself and his brother in the verse: *"O my Lord! Forgive me and my brother and enter us in Your mercy. Surely You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 151*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the deeds of people cease once they die except for three things, the rewards of which will continue to accrue to them. These are (1) Sadaqah Jāriya, (2) knowledge that was imparted

and continues to benefit the recipient and (3) pious children who continue to make supplication for the deceased. Certain Ahadīth mention seven such deeds the rewards of which perpetuate. There can be no objection to this hadith in the light of the above verse of Surah Najm because the deeds referred to are carried out by the same person. The supplication of pious children will benefit the parents because it was the parents efforts that produced the piety in the children so that they would be capable of making supplication for their parents.

Allāh Ta'āla describes Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام as *"Ibrahīm who fulfilled"*. This means that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام duly fulfilled every task that Allāh commanded of him. The discussion of the tasks that Allāh entrusted Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام with have been discussed in Surah Baqarah where Allāh says, *"When his Lord tried Ibrahīm with certain words, which he fulfilled."* [*Surah 2, verse 124*]

Other commentators state that the verse refers to time when Allāh commanded Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام saying, *"Submit!"* to which Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام replied, *"I submit to the Lord of the universe"* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 131*]. After this, Allāh placed many trying difficulties in the path Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, affecting his wealth, health and family. These were such that it took great patience and fortitude to endure and to fulfil Allāh's commands in their wake. The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that the command to slaughter his son and the sterling obedience that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام displayed on that occasion is sufficient to bear testimony to his devotion to Allāh.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned that during the time of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام a relative of a murderer was sometimes executed in place of the murderer himself. Instead of executing a murderer, it used to occur that the murderer's father, son, brother, uncle, cousin, wife, husband or slave had to give their life in exchange.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prevented them from doing this and conveyed to them Allāh's message which read, *"One bearer shall not be burdened with the burden of another."*

Some commentators quote two Ahadīth to explain *'Ibrahīm who fulfilled"*. They say that it refers to the fact that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was particular about performing four Rakāhs Salāh early every morning and continued this practice until his death. This hadith has been narrated by Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه. In the second hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his companions رضى الله عنهم, *"Do you know why Allāh Ta'āla says about His friend 'Ibrahīm who fulfilled'? Every morning and evening he used to recite:*

> {*TRANSLATION: "So glorify Allah's purity during the evenings and mornings. All praise is for Him in the heavens and the earth, and glorify His purity during the latter part of the day and during the afternoons. He extracts the living from the dead, the dead from the living and revives the earth, after it's death. Thus will you people be resurrected."* [*Surah Rūm (30), verses 17-19*]}

Allāh continues to say, *"The end shall surely be to your Lord."* Irrespective of how long one lives in this world, one will certainly have to die. Thereafter one

will have to stand in Allāh's court to give an account of all one's deeds. Another interpretation of this verse is that when one ponders over Allāh's creation, the end result of this reflection will lead one to recognise Allāh. One should then not think about the Being of Allāh because this is beyond man's understanding.

ALLĀH DOES EVERYTHING

Allāh says further, *"It is certainly He (Allāh) who makes (people) laugh and cry."* Laughing, crying and their causes have been created by Allāh. In addition to this, Allāh says that *"It is only He who gives death and life."* Besides Allāh, none has the ability to give life or death to anything.

"Verily it is only He who created pairs of male and female from the seed when it issues forth." When the male and female gametes unite by Allāh's command after the sperm issues forth, a child is conceived. Just as Allāh is responsible for creating people in this manner *"The second creation is undoubtedly His responsibility (as well)."* Human existence does not terminate after people have died and their bodies have decomposed. They will be resurrected and presented for questioning in the Ākhirah (Hereafter). Allāh Ta'āla has assumed responsibility for resurrecting people on the Day of Judgement and He shall certainly fulfil His task despite the denial of the polytheists and disbelievers. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 27 p. 69*]

Allāh continues, *"Verily He grants affluence and poverty."* Allāh has created wealth and everything that wealth can acquire including those things that continue generating more wealth, such as plantations, buildings, etc.

"And He is the Lord of Sirius." The Arabic word *"Shi'rā"* refers to Sirius (also called the Dog Star, which is the brightest star in the sky because of its closeness to the earth). The Arabs used to worship this star and believed that it had an effect on their lives. *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports that the Banu Himyar and Banu Khuzā'ah tribes used to worship this star and that a person named Abu Kabsha from the Banu Khuzā'ah tribe initiated its worship. In this verse, Allāh refutes the belief that this star could have an effect on people. Just as everything else is Allāh's creation, so too is this star. People are thereby exhorted to forsake worshipping this star and to rather worship the Lord of this star.

THE DESTRUCTION OF FORMER NATIONS

Allāh then states that it was He Who *"destroyed the former Ād and the Thamud so that none remained."* The Ād was the same arrogant nation who proclaimed, *"Who can be more powerful than us?"* and the Thamud were so powerful that they used to carve homes out of mountains. However, notwithstanding the might of these nations, Allāh Ta'āla destroyed their civilisations when they rejected Belief.

"And (He destroyed) the people of Nūh before, who were most tyrannical and rebellious. He also threw down the overturned cities." The *"overturned cities"* refers to the destroyed cities of the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. These people rejected the message of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and indulged in the vile sin of homosexuality. As a result, the very ground on which their cities stood was lifted into the sky, overturned and tossed down. In addition to this, stones were rained on them. The sheer force of the punishment was so severe that Allāh describes it

by merely saying, *"So that thing (punishment) engulfed them which did."* This verse is similar to the verse which describes the horror of phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his army's punishment. The severity of that punishment was also so indescribably severe that Allāh merely states, *"and there covered them that of the sea that did cover them."* [*Surah TāHā (20), verse 78*]

"Then which bounties of your Lord do you doubt?" Allāh created humans as male and female; made them laugh and cry; gave them life and shall revive them after death; granted them wealth and the benefits that it acquires and even informed them about the destruction of former nations so that they take heed. However, instead of taking heed and appreciating these bounties, the disbelievers doubt them.

NOTE: Concerning the adjective *'former"* in the verse *"the former Ād"*, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that this adjective is used because the Ād was the first nation to be destroyed after the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. He then quotes the commentator Allāma Tabari رحمة الله عليه who stated that this adjective is used to distinguish the Ād from another nation who also called themselves Ād. This second Ād nation used to live in the vicinity of Makkah with the Amālīq nation. The eminent scholar Mubarrad رحمة الله عليه states that *"the former Ād"* refers to the original nation of Ād while the Thamūd are referred to as *"the second Ād"*.

(55) Then which bounties of your Lord do you doubt? (56) This is a warner from among the earlier warners. (57) The swift approaching matter has arrived. (58) There is none to avert it besides Allāh. (59) Are you astonished about this matter? (60) And do you laugh instead of crying? (61) And continue being arrogant? (62) Prostrate to Allāh and worship Him.

PEOPLE ARE SURPRISED ABOUT JUDGMENT WHEN IT HAS ALREADY COME SO CLOSE

Allāh says in these concluding verses of the Surah, *"This is a warner from among the earlier warners."* The word *"This"* refers either to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم or to the Qur'ān. The verse means that all the subject matter of the Qur'ān that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conveyed to mankind were also conveyed by the earlier Anbiya (the Holy Prophets) عليهم السلام and their divine scriptures. What the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conveyed was therefore nothing strangely new. The addressees of the Qur'ān must therefore be cautious not to follow in the footsteps of the previous nations who were destroyed when they rejected the message of their Prophet's عليهم السلام.

"The swift approaching matter has arrived. There is none to avert it besides Allāh." Even though many people do not believe in the coming of Judgement, it will still occur. Whenever Allāh decrees a matter, it is inevitable. In fact, its occurrence is a certain as something that has already arrived. No person's rejection will prevent it. It is therefore wise for every person to prepare for it because nothing will be able to stop it when it arrives.

"Are you astonished at this matter? And do you laugh instead of crying? And continue being arrogant?" Allāh asks man whether he is astonished at the warnings of the Qur'ān and the advent of Judgement. Instead of adopting a proud attitude and mocking Islām, the disbelievers are urged to forsake their disbelief, to repent and to accept Islām. Their pride which prompts them to reject the truth and to think lowly of Muslims shall be the cause of their doom in both worlds. The Arabic word *"Sāmidūn"* (translated above as *"being arrogant")* is derived from the root word *"Sumūd"*, which denotes lifting the head proudly. This word is also used to denote singing, engaging in futile entertainment and swelling with anger.

"Prostrate to Allāh and worship Him." This final verse of the Surah tells people that after hearing about Allāh's immense powers, about the destruction of previous nations and about the imminence of Judgement, the only course of action befitting of an intelligent person is to submit and bow to the truth. They should therefore prostrate only to Allāh and worship Him only. Many commentators have translated *"worship Him"* as *"obey him"*

According to Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه, it is Wājib *(compulsory)* to make Sajdah (*prostration*) when reciting or hearing this concluding verse of Surah Najm.

سورة القمر

Makkan	Surah Al-Qamar	Verses 55

اقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ﴿١﴾ وَإِن يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ﴿٢﴾ وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۚ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُم مِّنَ الْأَنبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ﴿٤﴾ حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ ۖ فَمَا تُغْنِ النُّذُرُ ﴿٥﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) (Qiyamāh) the day of Judgement has drawn close and the moon has been split. (2) If they see any sign they turn away and say that it is magic that will soon vanish. (3) They deny and they follow their whims whereas every matter is established. (4) Indeed such news has come to them in which there is sufficient warning to caution. (5) A most perfect wisdom, but warners have not benefited (them).

THE MOON HAS BEEN SPLIT AND A BELIEF OF THE POLYTHEISTS IS REFUTED

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم demonstrated many miracles to the polytheists of Makkah when he announced his prophethood. The polytheists themselves requested for many of these miracles. Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that once when the polytheists asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to show them a miracle, he split the moon. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 22*]

A narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once called the people to witness that the moon once split into two parts. One part was visible on top of the mountain while the other was below. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 21*]

Tirmidhi reports that the splitting of the moon occurred twice while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in Makkah and that the first two verses of Surah Qamar were revealed with reference to this. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* (*v. 4 p. 258)* reports that when the Quraysh of Makkah sighted the splitting, they claimed that they had been mesmerised. However, when they made inquiries from some travellers, they attested that they had seen the moon split into two parts. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse *"Judgement has drawn close and the moon has been split."*

Tirmidhi reports that when the travellers attested to the splitting, some polytheists said, *"If we were mesmerised, everyone else could not have been."* The splitting of the moon indicated to people that something that they thought to be impossible turned into reality. In a like manner, Judgement day will also be a reality even though the disbelievers regard it to be impossible.

Allāh states further, *"If they see any sign they turn away and say that it is magic that will soon vanish."* It was the practice of the polytheists to ignore miracles when they saw them, claiming that what they saw was merely the temporary effect of magic on them. In this manner *"They deny and they follow their whims."* despite witnessing great miracles, they refused to believe because they had made gods out of their own whims and passions. Instead of accepting the truth, they chose to follow only that which appealed to their whims.

Allāh asserts that *"every matter is established"* i.e. the truth shall remain the truth and falsehood shall remain falsehood. These will not be altered by anything and if the disbelievers fail to perceive the truth initially, the truth will eventually dawn upon them and they will realise that it is not magic that they see. The author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* has interpreted the verse to mean that good will be the lot of good people and evil shall be the lot of evil people. The good will lead people to Heaven and evil will lead people to Hell.

Referring to the polytheists of Makkah, Allāh says further, *"Indeed such news has come to them in which there is sufficient warning to caution."* The narratives of previous civilisations who were destroyed because of their disbelief are sufficient for people to realise the error of their ways. These incidents should jolt thinking persons out of their slumber because they are filled with *"most perfect wisdom"*. However, when the disbelievers and polytheists are drowning in polytheism *(shirk)* and disbelief, it seems as if *"warners have not benefited (them)"*. They stubbornly pay no attention to warnings and continue in their ways. Allāh says in Surah Yunus [*Surah 10, verse 101*], *"Arguments and warnings are of no avail to those people who do not believe."*

The splitting of the moon has been authentically recorded in Bukhari, Muslim and various other books of Ahadīth. There is therefore no doubt that it actually occurred. However, because of their enmity for Islām, the disbelievers object to this miracle by saying that if the moon was really split, this fact would have been recorded in other parts of the world because the moon is seen from everywhere. In reply to this objection, Scholars have tendered the following replies.

Firstly, there was no system of recording in those times for the account to be well documented. Paper was an extremely scarce commodity then. If it ever was recorded, there exists every possibility that the recording was lost through the passage of time.

Secondly, it is evident that the moon does not rise over the entire world at the same time. While one part of the world is experiencing daylight, another part is experiencing nightfall. As for those parts of the world where it was daytime, there is no question of them witnessing the event. Although it was night in many other parts of the world then, it is obvious that while the night was still young in some parts, it was later in other parts and even later elsewhere. Overcast

conditions could well have prevented people in other parts from witnessing this event.

In addition to this, although the splitting was visible from Mina, many people there did not witness it because they may have been involved in other activities. Many were in their homes and many were sound asleep. It is therefore obvious that if everyone in Makkah did not see it, it is even less likely that everyone else in the rest of world would see it. There was certainly no forewarning given to anyone, so none saw the necessity to stand outside to watch. Those people who were required to see did see the event. If the people of the world or all the Arabs had seen the miracle, some records would then surely be found. The people of Makkah who saw the miracle did not believe in it and regarded it to be an act of mesmerism. It is therefore obvious that they would never have documented the event to give it impetus. There is therefore no wonder that the event is not recorded in historical works.

Although the sun is far larger than the moon, yet the sun is not visible to the entire world at the same time. While some parts of the world are experiencing daylight, others have nightfall. When a solar eclipse takes place, the news spreads fast that it will be visible only from certain countries at certain times. It is not visible to the entire world. Then too, although the news of the eclipse is disseminated through the media months in advance, every person of the country concerned does not see it because the news does not reach everyone. In fact, even if one has to ask the educated people of a country when an eclipse took place in their country and how many times it occurred, they will be unable to answer. There is scarcely a book available that details the chronological sequence of eclipses throughout history.

If this is the case with solar eclipses which occur relatively frequently, one should not be surprised when the splitting of the moon is not documented when it occurred only once. In addition to this, it occurred only in Arabia at the time of Isha and no sooner did it split into two, then a short while later the two parts joined to reform.

Under the influence of the disbelievers, many Muslims also refute the occurrence of the splitting of the moon and say that the verse only refers to the Day of Judgement. This is farfetched because the verse is clearly phrased to refer to an incident in the past tense - not in the future tense. Even though one may prove this point by interpreting the verse in the future tense, there is no way in which one can interpret the relevant authentic Ahadīth on the subject. There is nothing to prevent the Great Being of Allāh from making the moon split in Makkah over 1400 years ago when all accept that He shall make it split by means of the blowing of the trumpet on the Day of Judgement. There is therefore no necessity to search for farfetched interpretations of the verse.

(6) ... So ignore them. The day when the caller shall call to a thing that is unpleasant. (7) Their gazes will be cast down and they shall emerge from their graves as if they are scattered locusts... (8) ... running towards the caller. The disbelievers will say, "This is an extremely difficult day."

ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT PEOPLE WILL EMERGE FROM THEIR GRAVES LIKE SCATTERED LOCUSTS

The first of the above verses addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him, *"So ignore them."* Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to be heartbroken by the disbeliever's rejection. They shall suffer the consequences of their deeds.

Allāh continues to say, *"The day when the caller shall call to a thing that is unpleasant." "The caller"* in the verse refers to the angel who will blow the trumpet to sound the advent of Judgement. When Judgement will take place, the disbelievers will see for themselves the truth of what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached to them. When the trumpet will be blown the second time, people will return to life and emerge from their graves. Allāh describes the scene by saying, *"Their gazes will be cast down and they shall emerge from their graves as if they are scattered locusts running towards the caller."* The people will all hasten towards the Plains of Resurrection in droves of billions. Because the Plains of Resurrection will be large, open and vast, it will appear as if the large numbers of people are swarms of locusts converging on a field. As this takes place, *"The disbelievers will say, 'This is an extremely difficult day."*

In Surah Ma'ārij [*Surah 70, verses 43,44*], Allāh says, *"the day (of Judgment) when they will hurriedly emerge from the graves as if they are rushing towards a temple. Their gazes will be lowered and humiliation will engulf them. This is the day that they were promised."*

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ (9) فَدَعَا رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَغْلُوبٌ فَٱنتَصِرْ (10) فَفَتَحْنَآ أَبْوَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَآءٍ مُّنْهَمِرٍ (11) وَفَجَّرْنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَٱلْتَقَى ٱلْمَآءُ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ (12) وَحَمَلْنَٰهُ عَلَىٰ ذَاتِ أَلْوَٰحٍ وَدُسُرٍ (13) تَجْرِى بِأَعْيُنِنَا جَزَآءً لِّمَن كَانَ كُفِرَ (14) وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَٰهَآ ءَايَةً فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ (15) فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ (16) وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ (17)

(9) The nation of Nūh denied before them. They falsified Our slave, said that he is a madman and he was rebuked. (10) So he supplicated to his Lord (saying), "Indeed I am overpowered so assist me." (11) So We opened up the doors of the sky to torrential rains. (12) And We cleaved springs in the earth so that the waters met for a matter preordained. (13) We carried him [Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام] on an ark of planks and nails... (14) ... travelling under Our vigilance. This was the reward for the one who was not appreciated. (15) Verily We left (the

incident) as a lesson, so is there anyone who will take heed? (16) How was My punishment and My warnings? (17) Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?

THE DESTRUCTION OF SAYYIDINA NŪH'S عليه السلام NATION

As the obstinacy of the Makkan polytheists intensified, Allāh Ta'āla cautioned them by relating the accounts of various nations of the past who falsified the Anbiya (The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام). Surah Qamar briefly mentions the destruction of the nations of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام (the Ād), Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام (the Thamūd) and the nation of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. Allāh begins by making mention of the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"The nation of Nūh denied before them* [*i.e. before the Mushrikīn (polytheists) of Makkah*]. *They falsified Our slave, said that he is a madman and he was rebuked."* The people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام behaved most disrespectfully towards him and refused even to listen to him. The details of this incident are found in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 59-64]*, Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 25-49*] and Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verse 105-121*]. More will follow in Surah Nūh (*Surah 71*), Insha Allāh.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام preached Oneness of Allāh to his people for *950* years and made great efforts to guide the people. However, they refused to listen to him and accused him of being misguided by saying, *"We see that you are surely in manifest deviation."* They became so obstinate and bold that they said to Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, *"So bring forth what you promise us if you are of the truthful ones."* In this way, they asked for punishment. Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had already begun to lose hope in them because after 950 years effort *"Only a few believed in him."*

Eventually, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام grew frustrated and pleaded to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Assist me, for they have denied me."* The above verse of Surah Qamar states that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام also prayed to Allāh saying, *'indeed I am overpowered so assist me."* The supplication he made invoking Allāh's punishment on his people is quoted in Surah Nūh as follows: *"O my Lord! Leave not on earth even one of the disbelievers. Surely if You leave them they will mislead Your bondsmen and only sinners and disbelievers will be born to them.* [*Surah (71), verses 26, 27*]

Allāh accepted the supplication of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and commanded him to build an ark. Here in Surah Qamar, Allāh describes the ark as *"an ark of planks and nails."* When the ark was completed, Allāh commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام to take all the believers with him on the ark along with a pair of every animal. When this was done, Allāh sent torrential rains from the sky and caused water to gush from the ground. The water level on the ground thus rose extremely high; as Allāh says that *"the waters met for a matter preordained."* The *"matter"* was the destruction of the entire disbelieving nation.

The ark travelled under Allāh's protection and all aboard were kept safe while the disbelievers all drowned. Because the people ill treated Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and did not appreciate the good counsel he gave them, Allāh says, *"This was the reward for the one who was not appreciated."* After making mention of the destruction of the disbelievers, Allāh says, *"Verily We left (the incident) as a lesson,*

so is there anyone who will take heed? How was My punishment and My warnings?" This verse make it clear that the incidents of previous nations are not merely mentioned in the Qur'ān for the sake of story-telling, but are mentioned so that people derive lessons from them. The punishments that afflicted the people of the past were not mere hardships but were extremely devastating. The disbelievers should ponder deeply about these incidents and realise that their plight shall be for punishment. Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had already begun to lose hope in them because after 950 years effort *"Only a few believed in him."*

Eventually, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام grew frustrated and pleaded to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Assist me, for they have denied me."* The above verse of Surah Qamar states that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام also prayed to Allāh saying, *'indeed I am overpowered so assist me."* The supplication he made invoking Allāh's punishment on his people is quoted in Surah Nūh as follows: *"O my Lord! Leave not on earth even one of the disbelievers. Surely if You leave them they will mislead Your bondsmen and only sinners and disbelievers will be born to them."* [*Surah (71), verses 26, 27*]

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ALLĀH HAS MADE THE QUR'ĀN SIMPLE

Allāh declares, *"Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?"* This verse is mentioned four times in Surah Qamar. The first time is after the incident of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. The second one follows the narrative of the Ād, the third follows that of the Thamūd while the fourth follows the story of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. The verse makes it clear that Allāh has simplified the Qur'ān for people. Thereafter Allāh invites man to derive lessons from the Qur'ān.

The Arabic phrase *"Lidh Dhikr"* (translated above as *"to take lesson from")* has been interpreted by Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه as *'for memorisation"*

and *'for recitation'*. This means that Allāh has made the Qur'ān easy to memorise and easy to recite. At the same time, Allāh has also made the Qur'ān easy to understand. Of course, every person does not have the capacity to deduce laws of jurisprudence from the Qur'ān. This fact is no cause for objection because the verse does not state that every single part of the Qur'ān from the beginning to the end is easily understandable in every way. It is incorrect for people to use this verse to interpret the Qur'ān according to their personal understanding, thereby contradicting the interpretations of the Mufassirīn (*exegesist*). Most of these people do not even understand Arabic and the laws of the language.

Allāh Ta'āla has been extremely benevolent to the Muslim Ummah by granting us the ability to commit the Qur'ān to memory. If it should ever happen (Allāh forbid!) that the written copies of the Qur'ān are destroyed, it can easily be rewritten according to the recitation of a young child who is a Hāfidh (*One who memorise the Quran*). The Jews and Christians lost their scriptures because they relied on the written copies. Now all they have is translations without an original with which to compare the translations.

THE MIRACULOUS NATURE OF THE QUR'ĀN AND PEOPLE'S NEGLIGENCE

One of the great miracles of the Qur'ān is that women, old men, children and young adults of all age groups are able to memorise it. They are able to do this even though they would be unable to memorise a lengthy text in their own languages. People who seek only this world, are heedless of the Ākhirah and who make their children seekers of the world like themselves deprive themselves of the great boon of the Qur'ān, of memorising it and of reciting it with proper tajwīd (*the real accent of Arabic pronunciation*). The fact of the matter is that so many people are Muslims only by heritage. They are Muslims because they were born in a Muslim home and have no concern for educating themselves about the requisites of Religion. To make matters worse, they cast their children in the same mould. True Muslims are those who take the Qur'ān to heart, memorise it and are able to recite it with proper Tajwīd. In addition to this, they make their children Huffādh (*plural of Hāziz*), educate their children in Islām, make them Scholars and keep them in the company of pious Scholars.

O Muslims! It is extremely easy to make your children Huffādh. It is ignorant people who have made the statement that becoming a Hāfidh is akin to chewing iron balls. One should bear in mind that the Qur'ān is not memorised because of a person's good memory but because of a miracle.

Many ignorant people are given to saying that there is no benefit in memorising the Qur'ān like a parrot. It is tragic that such people know the value of money but are oblivious of the virtues of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. They seem not to understand that one earns the reward of ten good deeds for every letter of the Qur'ān that one recites. In addition to this, the parents of a Hāfidh will be given a shining crown to wear on the Day of Judgement and the Hāfidh will be permitted to intercede for his family members on the Day of Judgement, thereby saving them from Hell. Many people fail to understand these benefits and say that a Hāfidh will soon become a *"Mulla"* and will be unable to earn a living. I often tell people that nothing prevents a Hāfidh from engaging in business or

taking up employment if he wants to. Of course, becoming a *"Mulla"* is an extremely great fortune for any person, but those who do not want this good fortune should at least make an effort to make their children Huffādh. Thereafter, they are at liberty to pursue any lawful career.

THE BLESSINGS OF THE QUR'ĀN

I have seen many people becoming Huffādh while working, while studying and even after growing white hairs. Children who become Huffādh are blessed with an excellent memory and develop an extremely sound understanding. It is noticed that they always excel their pīrs (*mentors*) in any field they choose to further their studies. The blessings of the Qur'ān cause people to progress in this world as well as in the Ākhirah. It is regrettable that so many people have not understood the immense blessings that the Qur'ān offers. They will realise this only once try it for themselves.

THE PENALTY FOR FORGETTING THE QUR'ĀN

Just as it is important to memorise the Qur'ān, it is also extremely important to ensure that one does not forget it after memorising. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Take care not to allow the Qur'ān to slip away from memory (by reciting it in Salāh and out of Salāh). I swear by the Being in whose control is my life! The Qur'ān is quicker to escape one's memory than a camel that is (loosely) fastened."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 190 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Just as the Qur'ān is quickly memorised and absorbed into the hearts of those who value it, it rapidly vanishes from the hearts of those who are not particular about revising it often. The Qur'ān is not in need of any person and has no need to remain with a person who is indifferent towards it. There are severe punishments for those who forget the Qur'ān. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person who forgets the Qur'ān after learning it shall appear before Allāh on the Day of Judgement in the form of a leper (i.e. without teeth and limbs)."* [*" Mishkāt" p. 191 from Abu Dawūd and Dārmi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned, "When the good deeds of my Ummah were shown to me I noticed among these the deed of removing any harmful object lying in a Masjid. When the sins of my Ummah were shown to me I did not see any sin graver than that of a person forgetting a Surah or verse of the Qur'ān that was given to him." [*"Mishkāt" p. 69 from Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]

People who make their children Huffādh do not merely look at the few years of effort in this world, but focus on the success of the Ākhirah and the everlasting boons to be found there. Allāh shall surely appreciate the efforts of such people.

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿18﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نَحْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرٍّ ﴿19﴾ تَنزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ ﴿20﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿21﴾

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

(18) The Ād denied, so how was My punishment and warnings? (19) Verily We sent against them a cyclonic wind during days of perpetual misfortune. (20) It ousted people as if they were uprooted palm trunks. (21) So how was My punishment and warnings? (22) Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ĀD

Allāh sent Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام as messenger to the nation of Ād. When he preached to them the message of Oneness of Allāh and made great efforts to reform them, they acted insolently and said to him, *'indeed we see you in foolishness and we surely consider you to be among the liars."* They also told him that they were not at all convinced by the warnings of punishment that he sounded to them. They said, *"Bring what you have promised us if you are of the truthful!"* Consequently, Allāh *"sent against them a cyclonic wind during days of perpetual misfortune."* The wind raged for seven consecutive nights and eight consecutive days. As the wind blew, the Ād were cast down like felled palms. They are likened to palm trees because they were extremely stolid and powerful people. In fact, Allāh says about the Ād that they *"were arrogant on earth without reason, and said, 'Who can be more powerful than us?'"*

Their pride was smashed when the wind disproved their invincibility. Allāh says that the wind was so powerful that *"It ousted people as if they were uprooted palm trunks."* Allāh states in Surah Hāqqa [*Surah 69, verse 7*], *"You would have seen them lying flat on the ground as if they were hollow palm trunks."*

Allāh concludes this incident by saying, *"So how (severe) was My punishment and warnings? Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?"*

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِٱلنُّذُرِ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالُوٓا۟ أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَٰحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُۥٓ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّفِى ضَلَـٰلٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَءُلْقِىَ ٱلذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنۢ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مَّنِ ٱلْكَذَّابُ ٱلْأَشِرُ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّا مُرْسِلُوا۟ ٱلنَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ فَٱرْتَقِبْهُمْ وَٱصْطَبِرْ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَنَبِّئْهُمْ أَنَّ ٱلْمَآءَ قِسْمَةٌۢ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ كُلُّ شِرْبٍ مُّحْتَضَرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَنَادَوْا۟ صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَىٰ فَعَقَرَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٠﴾ إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً فَكَانُوا۟ كَهَشِيمِ ٱلْمُحْتَظِرِ ﴿٣١﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

(23) The Thamūd denied the warners. (24) They said, "If we were to follow a lonesome human from among ourselves, we would surely be astray and insane." (25) "Has a revelation come only to him from among all of us? Nay, he is but an arrogant liar." (26) Tomorrow they shall come to know who is an arrogant liar.

(27) "We shall certainly send the camel as a test to them so watch them and be patient." (28) "Inform them that the water shall be shared between them and each should present himself on his turn." (29) So they called for their companion who attacked and cut. (30) How was My punishment and warnings? (31) Verily We sent against them a single shout and they became like the rubble of a fence builder. (32) Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE THAMŪD

The Thamūd lived after the Ād and used to carve their homes out of the mountains. Allāh Ta'āla sent Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام as a Prophet to them. He preached Oneness of Allāh to them and invoked them to carry out good deeds. However, pride got the better of them and they told Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام that he was just an ordinary human being like the rest of them and that there was nothing special about him which should make them follow him. They said to him, *"If we were to follow a lonesome human from among ourselves, we would surely be astray and insane. Has a revelation come only to him from among all of us? Nay, he is but an arrogant liar."*

They accused Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام of pretending to be the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام so that people can look up to him and respect him. Allāh says, *"Tomorrow they shall come to know who is an arrogant liar."* i.e. it will not be long before they come to realise the error of their ways and that he is really Allāh' s true messenger. The people of Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام asked him to extract a pregnant camel from a mountain as a miracle to prove his apostleship. They said that if he demonstrates this miracle for them, they would believe that he is Allāh's Holy Prophet. When Allāh allowed Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام to demonstrate this miracle for them, Allāh caused a large camel to emerge from the mountain. Because of her large size, the camel ate and drank much more than normal camels.

Allāh quotes the words of Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام to his people when he told them, "This camel of Allāh is a sign for you, so leave it to graze in Allāh's land and do not afflict it with evil, for then a painful punishment will seize you." [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 73*]

The Thamūd had one well from which they gave their animals water to drink. Because the large camel also required water, Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام said to the people, *"This is the camel. It will have a day to drink and your animals will have an appointed day to drink."* In the words of Surah Qamar, Allāh Ta'āla instructed Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام saying, *"We shall certainly send the camel as a test to them, so watch them and be patient. Inform them that the water shall be shared between them and each should present himself on his turn."*

The Thamūd did not like the camel to share with their animals and finally decided to kill it even though Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام had warned them that they would suffer a terrible chastisement if they ever harmed the camel. Nevertheless, *"they called for their companion who attacked (the camel) and cut.* "He killed the camel by hamstringing her. When Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام discovered what they had done, he said to them, *"Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days. This is a*

promise that will not be falsified." [*Surah Hūd (11), verse 65*]

Consequently, Allāh *"sent against them a single shout and they became like the rubble offence builder"* i.e. besides losing their lives, even their bodies were left in shreds like destroyed fencing. Whereas Surah Qamar and Surah Hūd mention that they were destroyed by a shout, Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verse 78*] mentions that *"an earthquake seized them.* "The two types of punishment are mentioned because both afflicted them. Concerning this incident as well Allāh asks, *"How was My punishment and warnings?"* Allāh then concludes the story be reiterating, *"Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?"*

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍۭ بِٱلنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّآ ءَالَ لُوطٍۢ ۖ نَّجَّيْنَٰهُم بِسَحَرٍۢ ﴿٣٤﴾ نِّعْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى مَن شَكَرَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَنذَرَهُم بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا۟ بِٱلنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ رَٰوَدُوهُ عَن ضَيْفِهِۦ فَطَمَسْنَآ أَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَبَّحَهُم بُكْرَةً عَذَابٌ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

(33) The people of Lūt عليه السلام denied the warners. (34) Verily We sent against them a cyclonic wind that showered stones on them, except for the family of Lūt عليه السلام whom We rescued during the close of the night. (35) This was a special favour from Us. In this manner do We reward the grateful. (36) He certainly warned them that We would seize them but they started disputing about the warnings. (37) They attempted to seduce his guests so We obliterated their eyes. "Taste My punishment and the result of My warnings!" (38) Without a doubt, during the early hours of the morning a chastisement with long-lasting effects afflicted them. (39) So taste My punishment and the result of My warnings!" (40) Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE NATION OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام

Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام migrated with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام from their homeland and they both took up residence in Shām. Allāh Ta'āla sent Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام as a Holy Prophet to a group of several cities, the largest of which was Sodom. The people of these cities were evil people who carried out numerous acts of vice. The worst of these vices was the homosexuality. Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام preached to them to accept Oneness of Allāh and to desist from their evil deeds but despite his tireless efforts they still continued in their ways. Eventually Allāh sent His punishment.

Before the punishment arrived, Allāh sent a few angels to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام who told him, *"We are to destroy the inhabitants of this town* [i.e. the town of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام]. Its inhabitants are certainly oppressors. Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, '(How can you destroy the entire town when) Lūt is among

them.' They replied, *"We know best who is present there. We shall definitely rescue him and his family, except for his wife. She will be among those left behind (to perish in the punishment)."* [*Surah Ankabūt (Surah 29), verses 31,32*]

After giving Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام the good news that he was to father a son, the angels left to meet Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. Because they met Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام in the form of handsome men, he was anxious that his people might try to sodomise them. As expected, when the people saw the angels, they hurried to grab hold of them. Allāh refers to this when He says, *"They attempted to seduce his guests."*

When Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام saw them approach, he tried to reason with them saying, *"Oh my people! These daughters of mine (i.e. the women of my Ummah) are purer for you, so do fear Allāh and do not disgrace me before my guests. Is there not a righteous man among you?"* He warned them about the grievous consequences of *their deeds but none heeded his warning. Allāh says that Sayyidina Lūt* عليه السلام *"certainly warned them that We would seize them but they started disputing about the warnings."* Therefore, the first punishment to afflict them was that Allāh *"obliterated their eyes."* They were not only unable to see, but Allāh flattened their faces and there was no longer any eyes on their faces. Allāh then said to them, *"Taste My punishment and the result of My warnings!"*

The angels told Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام that he should take his family away during the night because they were going to destroy the people. In this manner, he and his family were rescued, except for his wife who was also killed in the punishment because she was not a believer. Early the next morning, stones were rained on the people. Each stone was marked with name of the person it was destined to strike, as Allāh says in Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 83*] that the stones *"were marked by your Lord"*. The ground where the cities stood was also lifted to the sky and thrown back upside down.

Some commentators mention that the people in the cities were killed when it was overturned while those in the outlying areas were struck by the stones. When Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه was asked whether anyone was left alive from the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, he replied, *"None survived. There was one person from them who was in Makkah at the time on business. When he left the Harām after fourty days, a stone struck him dead as well."*

Here in Surah Qamar; Allāh states, *"Verily We sent against them a cyclonic wind that showered stones."* Allāh says further, *"Without, a doubt, during the early hours of the morning a chastisement with long-lasting effect afflicted them."* Concluding the epic, Allāh reiterates, *"So taste My punishment and the result of My warnings! Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'ān simple to take lesson from, so is there any who will take lessons?"*

NOTE : Allāh says about the safe delivery of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and his family, *"This was a special favour from Us. In this manner do We reward the grateful."* This tells us that Allāh bestows His special favours on those believers who are grateful to Him. It is therefore necessary that believers continue worshipping Allāh and expressing their gratitude to Him at the same time.

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ ٱلنُّذُرُ (41) كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخَذْنَٰهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ (42)
أَكُفَّارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكُمْ أَمْ لَكُم بَرَآءَةٌ فِى ٱلزُّبُرِ (43) أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُّنتَصِرٌ (44)
سَيُهْزَمُ ٱلْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ ٱلدُّبُرَ (45) بَلِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَٱلسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَىٰ وَأَمَرُّ (46) إِنَّ
ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ وَسُعُرٍ (47) يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِى ٱلنَّارِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا۟ مَسَّ سَقَرَ
(48) إِنَّا كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقْنَٰهُ بِقَدَرٍ (49) وَمَآ أَمْرُنَآ إِلَّا وَٰحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍۭ بِٱلْبَصَرِ (50) وَلَقَدْ
أَهْلَكْنَآ أَشْيَاعَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ (51) وَكُلُّ شَىْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِى ٱلزُّبُرِ (52)
وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُّسْتَطَرٌ (53) إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَنَهَرٍ (54) فِى مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ
عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍۭ (55)

(41) Warnings definitely came to the people of phara'oh (Fir'oun). (42) They denied every one of Our signs so We seized them with the grasp of one most mighty and powerful. (43) Are your disbelievers better than these people or do you have immunity (from punishment) in the scriptures? (44) Or do they say, "We are a victorious band." (45) The band shall soon be defeated and they will turn their backs and flee. (46) Nay, Judgement day is their appointment and day of Judgement, shall be most severe and most bitter. (47) Indeed the criminals are in deviation and in blazing fires. (48) The day when they shall be dragged into the Fire on their faces (it will be said to them) "Taste the touch of the Blaze!" (49) We have certainly created everything by measure. (50) And Our command is but once like the blinking of an eye. (51) Verily We have destroyed nations like yourselves so is there any who will take heed? (52) Whatever they did was (recorded) in the Books. (53) Every minor and major deed is recorded. (54) Verily the abstinent ones shall be in gardens and rivers... (55) ... in a grand place by the Powerful Sovereign.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF PHARA'OH *(FIR'OUN)*

Phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his people were also extremely rebellious. Because phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* was a powerful ruler with a large force, he swelled with pride and claimed divinity. Allāh Ta'āla sent Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to preach Oneness of Allāh to phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his people. Despite witnessing various miracles of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his chieftains refused to believe. Because they controlled the people, the people also did not believe. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام warned them that they would suffer grave punishment if they did not believe, but his warnings fell on deaf ears.

The people of phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* also experienced several forms of punishment as lessons to mend their ways. These are mentioned in Surah A'rāf where Allāh says, *"Without doubt We afflicted the people of phara'oh (Fir'oun) with droughts and shortages in their produce so that they take heed. When favourable conditions prevailed they said, 'This is what we deserve.' However, when adverse*

conditions afflicted them they would attribute the misfortune to Mūsa and those with him. Lo! Their misfortune is in the knowledge of Allāh, but most of them know it not. They said, 'Whenever you bring a sign before us to bewitch us, we still do not want to believe in you.' So We sent to them the flood, the locusts, the ticks, the frogs and the blood as detailed signs. But they were an arrogant and a sinful nation. Whenever a punishment afflicted them they said, 'O Mūsa, pray for us to your Lord by that which He had pledged to you. If you remove the punishment from us, we would certainly believe in you and send the Bani Isrā'īl with you.' When We removed the punishment from them up to the period appointed for them to reach in Allāh's knowledge, they suddenly breached the covenant. So We took revenge on them and drowned them in the sea because they denied Our signs and were negligent." [*Surah 7, verses 130-136*]

ALLĀH ADDRESSES THE PEOPLE OF MAKKAH

Allāh states further, *"Are your disbelievers better than these people...* "In this verse, Allāh Ta'āla asks the polytheists of Makkah whether they think that they are better than the nations of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام, Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام and Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. This question is in terms of physical strength and wealth. It is obvious that the polytheists of Makkah were far inferior to these nations in all these respects. Despite their superior position, all these nations were destroyed when they rejected Belief. Allāh prompts the Makkans to ponder whether they will ever be able to resist Allāh's punishment when it came to them. The facts stare them in the face. Since these powerful nations of the past were helpless against Allāh's punishment, there was no way in which they could be saved.

Allāh .asks them further, *"...or do you have immunity (from punishment) in the scriptures?"* Allāh asks them whether any previous scriptures had absolved them of punishment so that they feel free to continue sinning and rejecting Belief. Like the previous question, this question is also rhetorical. There has been no divine scripture that has ever absolved any disbeliever of punishment. Since they are unable to resist Allāh's punishment and have nothing to guarantee their exemption from punishment, the disbelievers have no reason to cling to disbelief.

THE DEFEAT OF THE POLYTHEISTS AT BADR

Allāh asks, *"Or do they (the Makkan polytheists) say, 'We are a victorious band.* " The claimed that they were so united that they were invincible. This claim was extremely bold and obviously untrue. Let alone the rest of the world, their numbers were paltry compared the rest of the Arab nation. The only factor that safeguarded them from being attacked was the fact that they lived within the Haram and no one attacked them out of respect for the place.

"Durrul Manthūr" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the polytheists made this claim when they marched for the Battle of Badr. They boasted about their superior numbers and their unity, not realising that Allāh is the Master of the universe and that He can make any nation victorious over another, irrespective of numbers and strength.

As the polytheists marched boastfully, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was entreating Allāh Ta'āla for assistance. He prayed to Allāh saying, "O Allāh! By the promise you have made, I entreat You (to assist the Muslims). O Allāh! If this

small band is destroyed, there shall be none to worship You." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم persistently made this Supplication to Allāh until Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه held him by the hand and said, "Enough, O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! You have entreated your Lord very greatly." Later the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emerged from where he was reciting the verse, "The band shall soon be defeated and they will turn their backs and flee. "[*Bukhari p. 408, 562, 766*]

The Makkans soon had to swallow their proud words. They had to suffer disgrace when their fully armed army of a thousand was defeated by an ill equipped band of 313 men. Seventy polytheists were killed and another seventy were taken prisoner. Throughout the course of history, large armies of disbelievers boasted that they would crush Muslim armies because of their superiority. However, they also suffered disgrace when the Muslims convincingly defeated them. Even today many disbelievers forces are intent on destroying the Muslims in various parts of the world. Insha Allāh, they shall soon suffer disgrace. *"The band shall soon be defeated and they will turn their backs and flee."*

THE SEVERITY OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Allāh states further, *"Nay, Judgement day is their appointment and day of Judgement shall be most severe and most bitter."* Although the disbelievers will suffer defeat and disgrace in this world, the suffering of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* will be much worse. Just as it is extremely difficult to even taste let alone swallow something bitter, the Day of Judgement will also be extremely difficult to endure.

Allāh says further, "indeed the criminals are in deviation and in blazing fires." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه *has translated this verse to mean that "the criminals are in destruction and insanity."*

"The day when they shall be dragged into the Fire on their faces (and it will be said to them) 'Taste the touch of the Blaze! - The fire of this world cannot be compared to the fire of the Ākhirah (Hereafter), which is 69 times more intense than the fire of this world. Whereas a person cannot even endure a few seconds of this world's fire, a touch of the fire of Hell will be too excruciating to even describe. One can therefore not even imagine the intensity of suffering there for a long time. One should ponder deeply over this.

EVERYTHING IS CREATED BY MEASURE

Concerning the creation of all things, Allāh says, *"We have certainly created everything by measure."* This verse means that everything was created according to Allāh's predetermined plan as recorded in the *"Lowhul Mahfūdh"* (The Protected tablet). Allāh had already determined the destinies of everything before He created them.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the polytheists of Makkah once disputed with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the issue of Taqdīr (predestination). It was then that Allah revealed the two verses: *"The day when they shall be dragged into the Fire on their faces (and it will be said to them) 'Taste the touch of the Blaze!' We have certainly created everything by measure."* [*Muslim v. 2 p. 336*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh had written the destinies of the heavens and the earth fifty thousand years before creating them, while His throne was still on water. [*Muslim v. 2 p. 335*]

Allāh continues, *"And Our command is but once like the blinking of an eye."* The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* has mentioned three interpretations of this verse:

A. Whatever Allāh wants to do is accomplished like a single action without any difficulty.

B. Whatever Allāh creates comes into being with the single command of "Kun" ("Be"). The creation is then swifter than the blinking of an eye.

C. The advent of Judgement shall take place in an instant just like the blinking of an eye. If this interpretation is assumed, it will coincide with the verse of Surah Nahl where Allāh says, *"The affair of Judgement of Day is just like a blink of the eye, or even closer."* [*Surah 16, verse 77*]

"Verily We have destroyed nations like yourselves (who perpetrated disbelief) so is there any who will take heed?"

ALL THE DEEDS OF PEOPLE ARE METICULOUSLY RECORDED

"Whatever they did was (recorded) in the Books." This refers to the books of the recording angels who have been appointed to record every good and evil deed of every person. Therefore, no person need fear that any deed of his was wasted and had passed unnoticed. These records are so meticulously kept that *"Every minor and major deed is recorded."* The Lowhul Mahfūdh (*the protected tablet*) contains the records of everything past, present and future.

Allāh then speaks of the rewards that the pious and righteous people will receive when He says, *"Verily the abstinent ones shall be in gardens and rivers..."* The description of these rivers are mentioned in Surah Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم where Allāh says, *"The description of the Heaven that the people of Taqwa (pious peoples) have been promised is that it contains rivers of water that never contaminate, rivers of milk the taste of which never spoils, rivers of wine that are extremely palatable to those who drink it and rivers of the purest honey."* [*Surah 47, verse 15*]

Allāh says that the abstinent ones shall reside *"in a grand place* The literal translation of the Arabic word *'Maq'ad Sidq" is "a place of truth ". "Sidq"* (truth) refers to truthfulness in word, deed and beliefs. Those people who are true in all these respects shall be rewarded with a special station in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. It is for this reason that the station they will receive in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is called *"a place of truth "*. Allāh adds that the *"place of truth"* will be *"by the Powerful Sovereign."* This indicates that their positions in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* will be extremely elevated.

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سورة الرَّحْمٰن

Madinan	Surah Ar-Rahman	Verses 78

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٧﴾

الرَّحْمَٰنُ ﴿1﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿2﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ ﴿3﴾ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ﴿4﴾
الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ﴿5﴾ وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ ﴿6﴾ وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا
وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ﴿7﴾ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ﴿8﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ
وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ ﴿9﴾ وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ ﴿10﴾ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَالنَّخْلُ
ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ ﴿11﴾ وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ﴿12﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿13﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Ar Rahmān (The Most Merciful)... (2) ... taught the Qur'ān. (3) He created man ... (4) .... and taught him to speak. (5) The sun and moon (orbit in) calculated courses. (6) And the creeper and the tree prostrate. (7) (Allāh) raised the sky and erected the scales... (8) ...so that you do not transgress in the matter of the scale. (9) And so that you establish the scale with justice and you do not make the scale deficient. (10) (Allāh) has placed the earth for people. (11) On it are fruit, palms with sheathed stalks,... (12) ... seeds as chaff and sustenance as well. (13) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you (man and Jinn) deny?

AR RAHMĀN TAUGHT THE QUR'ĀN AND COMMANDS JUSTICE

In Surah Rahmān, Allāh discusses the various favours that He has blessed man and Jinn with. These favours are tremendous and benefit people in this world and in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Allāh repeats the verse *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you (man and Jinn) deny?"* 31 times in the Surah. This lends great beauty to the Surah in terms of recitation and meaning.

THE VIRTUES OF THE QUR'ĀN

The opening verses of Surah Rahmān make mention of such bounties that feed one's Belief, soul and body. Allāh begins by saying, *"Ar Rahmān (The Most*

Merciful) taught the Qur'ān." The Qur'ān is an extremely great bounty of Allāh to mankind. Allāh taught man the words of the Qur'ān, the meanings of the verses and has also allowed man to understand the eloquence and rhetoric of the Qur'ān. In addition to this, Allāh has also made it easy for man to memorise the Qur'ān. Man, who is merely an entity filled with blood, is extremely honoured to be able to contain the speech of Allāh in his bosom and to speak it with his tongue. Hundreds of thousands and millions of books have been written containing explanations of the Qur'ān and this practice will continue until Judgement day.

Besides teaching the Qur'ān to man, Allāh has also granted him the privilege of teaching the Qur'ān to others. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that when a person has been granted the bounty of the Qur'ān (i.e. he has memorised it) and he thinks that another person has a bounty greater than his, then he is ungrateful for an extremely great bounty.

Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best of you is he who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 270*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The best of my Ummah are the bearers of the Qur'ān and those who stay awake* [*in Ibādah (worship)*] *at night."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 110*]

The Qur'ān is the book of Allāh as well as Allāh's speech. The Muslims are truly honoured to have this great miracle in their hearts and flowing fluently even from the tongues of their little children. They are even able to remember the verses that are alike (Mutashābihāt) and are able to recite it while sleeping and when awake.

People who have nothing of the Qur'ān in their hearts are extremely unfortunate. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The heart that has nothing of the Qur'ān is like a deserted house. "*[*"Mishkāt" p. 186 from Tirmidhi and Dārmi*]

THE BOON OF SPEECH

Allāh continues to says that *"He created man and taught him to speak."* Allāh granted man knowledge, granted him the ability to speak and even taught him how to utilise this ability. Man can thus express what he feels and thinks. Allāh Ta'āla has also taught man how to speak eloquently and how to explain the meanings of the Qur'ān. Not only did Allāh teach people speech, but He taught man various languages and manners of expression. Man is also able to translate from language to language.

Allāh then speaks of the solar and lunar orbits when he says, *"The sun and moon (orbit in) calculated courses."* The orbits and movements of the sun and moon have been determined by Allāh and they are not at liberty to move as they please and when they please. Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"The sun travels towards its destination. This is the decree of the Mighty, the All Knowing. We have stipulated phases for the moon, until it returns like a branch of an old date palm. It is not possible for the sun to catch up with the moon, nor is it possible for the night to precede the day. They all swim within their orbits."* [*Surah 36, verses 38-40*]

Furthermore, *"the creeper and the tree prostrate."* Just like worshippers are

pleased to prostrate before Allāh out of obedience to Him, so too are all of Allāh's creation pleased to obey Him, including those plants that have an upright trunk and those that creep and have no rigidity. The watermelon, pumpkin and other plants that are unable to stand erect are referred to in this verse together with all large and small trees that stand by themselves. This interpretation is favoured by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه.

Allāh then speaks of the sky when He says that He *"raised the sky"*. It is Allāh Who raised the sky to its towering height. Once a person understand this, he will realise that it is also Allāh who gives height to everything else, whether the height is physical or figurative.

THE COMMAND TO WEIGH JUSTLY

Allāh Ta'āla states further that he *"erected the scales so that you do not transgress in the matter of the scale. And so that you establish the scale with justice and you do not make the scale deficient."* Allāh Ta'āla cautions man not to demand extra in weight when dues are given to him and not to reduce weight when payment is due from him. The abomination of this act is explained in the opening verses of Surah Tatfīf [*Surah 83, verses 1-6*]. The command to be just in weight and measurement is also mentioned in Surah An'ām *[Surah 6, verse 152]* where Allāh commands: *"And give full measure and weight in fairness."* Allāh also commands the same in Surah Bani Isrā'īl where He says, "Measure in full when you measure and weigh with proper scales." [*Surah 17, verse 35*].

Furthermore Allāh says that he *"has placed the earth for people."* Allāh Ta'āla has made the earth such that it is neither too hard nor too soft. People are able to dig the earth to create dams, wells, graves, plant plantations and lay the foundations of their buildings. At the same time, the earth can support man's structures, carry his railroads and highways and the beating hooves of his animals. Man is able to use the resources of the earth without her mumbling a word in protest. It is with reference to this that Allāh mentions in Surah Mulk [*Surah 67, verse 15]* that the earth is submissive.

Allāh then enumerates the various benefits that the earth gives to mankind when He says that the earth has *'fruit (and) palms with sheathed stalks"* Allāh has covered the stalks of such plants so that the fruit are protected and also because these coverings may be used for a variety of purposes. In addition to this, Allāh has also created *"seeds as chaff*. This verse refers to cereals like wheat, barley, etc which are like little seeds that provide ample nourishment for man. These foods are also protected in coverings that are separated as chaff to be fed to animals.

Together with all these bounties of the earth, Allāh has provided *"nourishment as well."* Some commentators have translated the Arabic word *"Rayhān"* (translated above as *"nourishment")* as "fragrant plants" whereas others translate it is as *'flowers"*. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه translates it as *"sustenance"* and has stated that the word *"Rayhān"* refers to sustenance wherever it is mentioned in the Qur'ān. The word *"Rayhān"* is used in place of "Rizq" (sustenance) because sustenance is something from which a person derives satisfaction.

The above verses mention those bounties of Allāh from the earth that are a staple diet for man, those that he eats for pleasure and those that he feeds to his animals. Therefore, Allāh asks, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you (man and Jinn) deny?"* Both man and Jinn benefit tremendously from these favours.

خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ مِن صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ﴿١٤﴾ وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِن مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ ﴿١٥﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٦﴾

(14) (Allāh has) created man from melodious sand that resembles potter's clay. (15) And created Jinn from pure leaping fire. (16) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you (man and Jinn) deny?

THE CREATION OF MAN AND JINN

Allāh describes the creation of man when He says that He has *"created man from melodious sand that resembles potter's clay.* "Allāh Ta'āla took sand, mixed it with water to make clay and then used the clay to fashion the mould of the first man, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. When it dried it became hard and would make a melodious sound if struck, just like a clay pot or vase. There were various stages in the creation of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and these were discussed in the commentary of verse 33 of Surah Hijr (*Surah 15*).

"And (Allāh) created Jinn from pure leaping fire." Just as Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was the father of mankind, many Scholars assert the Iblīs (*chief devil*) was the father of the Jinn. Therefore, it is often said that man in general is created from sand and that the Jinn are created from fire because their fathers were created from these substances. The blessing of being created and granted life is an extremely great bounty without which many other bounties cannot be enjoyed. Because Allāh has granted these many favours to mankind and to Jinn, it is incumbent on them to be grateful to Him. Allāh reminds them of this when He states *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you (man and Jinn) deny?"*

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ ﴿١٧﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٨﴾ مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ ﴿١٩﴾ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيَانِ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢١﴾ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشَآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٥﴾ كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٨﴾

(17) (Allāh is) the Lord of the two east's and the two wests. (18) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (19) He has released the two waters so that they meet. (20) Between the two (waters) is a barrier so that the two do not

transgress. (21) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (22) Pearls and coral emerge from both of them. (23) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (24) His are the raised ships on the oceans like mountains. (25) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (26) Everything on earth shall perish. (27) Only the countenance of your Lord the Possessor of majesty and benevolence shall remain. (28) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?

ALLĀH SEPARATES SALTY WATER FROM FRESH WATER AND CREATES THE JEWELS IN THESE WATERS

These verses also expound Allāh's great bounties. Allāh begins by saying that He is "the Lord of the two east's and the two wests." The "east's" refers to the rising points of the sun while the "west's" refers to the setting points of the sun. The rising and setting of the sun determines the day and night, both of which are beneficial to man and Jinn. During the day people are able to carry out various acts that are not possible during the night and vice versa. Allāh reminds people of this great favour when He says, "So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"

"Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه *and Sayyidina Ikrima* رحمة الله عليه *that the "the two east's" refer to the point where the sun rises during summer and the point where it rises during the winter. Similarly, the "two west's" refer to the point where the sun sets during the summer and the point where it sets during the winter. It has also been reported that according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās* رضى الله عنه*, "the two east's" refers to the rising of the sun and the rising of the twilight while "the two west's" refers to the setting of the sun and the setting of the twilight.*

Allāh then speaks of the oceans when he says, *"He has released the two waters so that they meet. Between the two (waters) is a barrier so that the two do not transgress."* Although two types of water bodies seem to be one to the onlooker, they are actually separated by an invisible barrier. In this way, the salty water and fresh water never mix. Man and Jinn derive various benefits from the two types of water and therefore are obliged to express gratitude to Allāh. Allāh reminds them of this when He says, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"*

"Pearls and coral emerge from both of them." The various jewels that emerge from the sea are also a great favour from Allāh and man and Jinn are required to be grateful to Allāh for these. Allāh reiterates, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه states that the Arabic word *"Lu 'lu"* (translated above as *"pearls"*) refers to smaller pearls and the word *"Marjān"* (translated above as *coral*) refers to larger pearls.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه stated that the word *"Lu 'lu"* (translated above as *"pearls "*) refers to large pearls and the word *"Marjān"* (translated above as *"coral"*) refers to red coral.

An explanation of the two types of water that do not mix has been given in the commentary of Surah Furqān where Allāh states, *"It is He Who has merged two seas, the one being sweet and quenching, while the other is salty and bitter. He has created between them a barrier that acts as an impregnable veil."* [*Surah 25, verse 53*]

Some have raised the objection that since pearls and coral are not found in fresh water whereas the verse mentions that pearl and coral emerge from *"both of them"*. In reply to this, some Scholars have mentioned that *"both of them"* means *"the collection of both of them"* (i.e. coral and pearl emerge from the collection of both waters). Others have mentioned that pearls are found in both fresh water and salt water but because they are found mostly in salt water, people generally are unaware of fresh water pearls. Of course, Allāh's knowledge is supreme and man may not contest His knowledge. Man's knowledge of things is extremely limited compared to Allāh's knowledge.

Allāh Ta'āla goes on to say that *"His are the raised ships on the oceans like mountains."* These huge ships remain afloat only by Allāh's will. When waters get rough and strong winds blow, it is only Allāh that protects the ship and those in the ship. Allāh allows the large ships laden with hundreds of tons of cargo to traverse through the oceans so that man may transport goods from one continent to another. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"in the huge ships which traverse the oceans carrying goods of benefit to man ... are signs for those who have intelligence."* [*Surah 2, verse 164*]

Allāh has inspired man to build ships and has granted him the expertise and capabilities to accomplish the task. Allāh has also taught man how to navigate the oceans, how to load his shipping vessels and how to derive maximum benefit from this skill. The shipping trade caters for the needs of millions of people throughout the world. It is therefore incumbent on people to express their gratitude to Allāh for this. Therefore, Allāh reiterates, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"*

EVERYTHING SHALL PERISH

"Everything on earth shall perish." Man, Jinn, fauna, flora, everything on land and everything at sea are all destined to perish when their lives have expired. When everything shall perish it will be *"Only the countenance of your Lord the Possessor of majesty and benevolence (Who) shall remain."*

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه states that *"Jalāl"* (translated above as *"majesty's)* refers to Allāh's grandeur and greatness and *"Al Ikrām"* (translated above as *"benevolence "*) means that Allāh should be revered to the extent that no degree of shirk (polytheism) is perpetrated. Viewing the word *"Al Ikrām"* from a different perspective, other commentators have mentioned that it means that Allāh is the only One who can truly bestow favours and mercy on creation. Allāh states in Surah Fajr [*Surah 89, verse 15*], *"As for man, when his Lord tries him by granting him honour and favours, he says, 'My Lord has honoured me'*".

Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl [*Surah 17, verse 83*], *"When We bestow favours upon man, he turns away and, changing direction, goes far."* It is stated in *"Faydhul Qadīr "* that the special honour denoted by the word *"Ikrām"* is not granted to sinners. However, general favours are granted to the disbelievers as well. It is my humble opinion that every human is blessed with a degree of honour by simply being human. This is denoted by the verse of Surah Bani Isrā'īl [*Surah 17, verse 70*] where Allāh says, *"We have granted honour to the children of Ādam."* However, for the disbelievers this honour is restricted to this world. As soon as they die,

they will be made to suffer disgrace, which will perpetuate until eternity. In the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, the disbelievers will have neither honour nor favours, whereas the believers shall enjoy an abundance of both. *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"*

يَسْـَٔلُهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِى شَأْنٍ (29) فَبِأَىِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (30) سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ ٱلثَّقَلَانِ (31) فَبِأَىِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (32) يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَن تَنفُذُوا۟ مِنْ أَقْطَارِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنفُذُوا۟ ۚ لَا تَنفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَٰنٍ (33) فَبِأَىِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (34)

(29) All in the heavens and the earth ask from Him and He is engaged in some matter every day. (30) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (31) We shall soon free Ourselves for you, O the two of you groups. (32) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (33) O assembly of Jinn and man! If you are able to transcend the limits of the heavens and the earth, then do so. You will be unable to transcend without the power. (34) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?

In the above verses, Allāh expresses His greatness and the dependence of man and Jinn on Him. Allāh also reminds man and Jinn that they are not free to do as they please but will be required to render an account for all their deeds. Allāh states that the day of Judgement will come when *"We shall soon free Ourselves for you, O the two of you groups."* This verse is symbolic and does not mean that Allāh is too preoccupied with other duties to take reckoning. Allāh is Capable of doing everything perfectly at once and no act will hinder Him from accomplishing another. The symbolic reference is to emphasise the fact that reckoning will be meticulous.

Allāh also states that *"He is engaged in some matter every day."* This means that Allāh is busy tending to the matters of the universe at every given point in time. By warning man and Jinn about the advent of Judgment day and reckoning, Allāh is bestowing them with an extremely great favour. Therefore, Allāh states, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"*

Highlighting the helplessness of man and Jinn, Allāh states, *"O assembly of Jinn and man! If you are able to transcend the limits of the heavens and the earth, then do so. You will be unable to transcend without the power."* It is clear that even the combined forces of man and Jinn cannot harness the power to transcend the limits of the heavens and the earth. Since man and Jinn are helpless in this very world, they will surely be powerless in the Ākhirah (*Hereafter*) as well. It is therefore wishful thinking to believe that one will be able to escape Allāh's punishment because there is nowhere to hide. When Judgement day arrives, every person will realise the error of his ways. However, it will then be too late. It is a great favour from Allāh that He has forewarned man and Jinn about this inevitable day. *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"*

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّن نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنتَصِرَانِ (35) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (36)
فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ (37) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (38)
فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُسْـَٔلُ عَن ذَنۢبِهِۦٓ إِنسٌ وَلَا جَآنٌّ (39) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (40)
يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَٰهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَٰصِى وَالْأَقْدَامِ (41) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (42)
هَٰذِهِۦ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِى يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ (43) يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ ءَانٍ (44) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ
رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (45)

(35) A flame and smoke shall be unleashed on the two of you (man and Jinn) and you will be helpless to ward it off. (36) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (37) (The time shall certainly come) when the sky shall cleave asunder and become red like hide. (38) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (39) On that day no man and no Jinn shall be asked about his sins. (40) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (41) The criminals will be recognized by their traits and will be seized by their forelocks and feet. (42) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (43) "This is Hell which the criminals used to deny." (44) They shall pass between it and the boiling water. (45) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?

THE SCENE OF JUDGEMENT

In the above verses, Allāh describes the horrors of Judgement day so that people may refrain from disbelief and become sincere Muslims. To remind man and Jinn to be grateful for these words of caution, Allāh often repeats the verse, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"*

Referring to the advent of Judgement, Allāh says, *"A flame and smoke shall be unleashed on the two of you (man and Jinn) and you will be helpless to ward it off"* The intensity of this fire will be extreme. Allāh says in Surah Mursalāt that the people of Hell will be told, *"Proceed towards the canopy of three parts which will neither provide shade nor offer shelter against the heat. Indeed, it (Hell) throws sparks like huge palaces resembling pitch black camels. May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"* [*Surah 77, verses 30-34*]

These verses of Surah Mursalāt state that the smoke of Hell shall assume the appearance of a canopy. Whereas the canopies of this world offer protection from heat, the smoke canopy of Hell will offer no such protection even though it will be extremely dark. None shall be able to assist another then.

Allāh then describes the splitting of the sky on the Day of Judgement when He says that the time shall certainly come "when the sky shall cleave asunder and become red like hide." A verse of Surah Furqān states, "Call to mind the day when the sky will be rent asunder with clouds and the angels will descend in large numbers." [Surah 25, verse 25]

"On that day no man and no Jinn shall be asked about his sins." A person is questioned to ascertain the facts because the questioner is unaware of the truth of a

matter. However, questions are sometimes posed merely to remind the person being asked about certain acts. Allāh was Aware of every person's acts even before people were created and has no need to ask them what they did in the world. Their questioning will therefore not be to establish whether they did something or not but it will be to remind them of their misdeeds. Allāh says in Surah Qasas [Surah 28, verse 78], "The criminals will not be questioned about their sins."

The guilty ones shall be forced to admit their misdeeds on the Day of Judgement and they will be unable to deny anything. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"We shall definitely question those to whom messengers were sent and We will surely question the messengers. We will certainly narrate to them with knowledge and We were not absent."* [*Surah 7, verses 6,7*]

Allāh states further, *"The criminals will be recognised by their traits*. The traits by which they will be recognised are mentioned in Surah Bani Isrā'īl [*Surah 17, verse 97*] in the following words: *"We shall raise them on their faces on the Day of Judgement, blind, dumb and deaf"* Another trait is mentioned in Surah TāHā as: *"The day when the trumpet will be blown and the criminals shall be gathered with blue eyes. They will whisper to each other saying, 'You have tarried only for ten days."* [*Surah 20, verses 102,103*]

According to these verses the disbelievers will be deaf, dumb, blind and blue-eyed on the Day of Judgement. They will be recognised by these characteristics, *"will be seized by their forelocks and feet"* and cast into Hell. When they are thrown into Hell, they will be told, *"This is Hell which the criminals used to deny."* They will thus be exposed to the worst forms of punishment. Citing one of these forms of punishment, Allāh says, *"They shall pass between it (Hell) and the boiling water."* Commentators interpret this verse to mean that the people in Hell will sometimes be made to suffer in the Fire itself and will sometimes have boiling water poured on them. Concerning the punishment of boiling water, Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Boiling water will be poured over their heads. Whatever is in their bellies, as well as their skins will be melted with it."* [*Surah 22, verses 19,20*]

Allāh says in Surah Kahf [*Surah 18, verse 29*], *"If they beseech help, they will be helped with water that is like the residue of burnt oil and will scorch their faces. A terrible drink indeed!"* Allāh speaks about it in Surah Muhammad as: *"Can these people ever be like those who will abide forever in the Fire and are given boiling water to drink, which tears their innards to shreds?"* [*Surah 47, verse 15*]

A verse of Surah Sāffāt [*Surah 37, verse 68*] states: *"Thereafter their return will definitely be towards the boiling water."* This verse tells us that there will be a special place in Hell where the people of Hell will be taken to be given boiling water to drink. Thereafter, they will be returned to their respective places of punishment. While some commentators state that the place of boiling water will be outside the boundaries of Hell, this is unlikely because none shall ever emerge from Hell after entering. It is therefore believed that the place of the boiling water will be within the confines of Hell. Allāh knows best.

The Arabic word *"Ān"* used in the verse describes the boiling water as being at the most extreme point possible i.e. the water shall remain at the highest degree of heat possible and shall not cool down even with the passing of time.

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴿46﴾ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿47﴾ ذَوَاتَآ أَفْنَانٍ ﴿48﴾ فَبِأَيِّ
ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿49﴾ فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ ﴿50﴾ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿51﴾ فِيهِمَا مِن
كُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ ﴿52﴾ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿53﴾ مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍۭ بَطَآئِنُهَا مِنْ
إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى ٱلْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿54﴾ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿55﴾ فِيهِنَّ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ لَمْ
يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ ﴿56﴾ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿57﴾ كَأَنَّهُنَّ ٱلْيَاقُوتُ
وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ ﴿58﴾ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿59﴾ هَلْ جَزَآءُ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ إِلَّا ٱلْإِحْسَٰنُ ﴿60﴾
فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿61﴾

(46) The one who fears standing in the presence of his Lord shall have two gardens. (47) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (48) Both these (gardens) shall be filled with branches. (49) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (50) In both (gardens) there shall be two gushing springs. (51) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (52) In both there shall be a pair of every fruit. (53) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (54) The people [of Jannah (Heaven)] shall recline on bedding lined with thick silk. The fruit of both gardens shall be extremely close. (55) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (56) In these gardens, there shall be maidens with lowered gazes whom no man or Jinn has ever touched. (57) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (58) They seem to appear like rubies and pearls. (59) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (60) Can the reward for good be anything but good? (61) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?

THE TWO GARDENS OF PARADISE THAT THE PIOUS SHALL ENJOY

After mentioning every bounty of the two gardens of paradise in the foregoing verses, Allāh repeats the question: *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"* Whereas the gardens of this world were described at the beginning of the Surah, the concluding verses describe the gardens of the Ākhirah (Hereafter).

Allāh says, *"The one who fears standing in the presence of his Lord shall have two gardens."* Although Heaven is itself an extremely large garden, there shall be several gardens within it, depending on the deeds of people. The above verse states that the person who abstains from sins and who is concerned about reckoning on the Day of Judgement shall be blessed with two gardens of Heaven. Concern for reckoning on the Day of Judgement is a great factor to motivate people to abstain from sin and to carry out good deeds. Allāh states in Surah Nāzi'āt , *"As for the one who fears standing before his Lord and who restrains himself from carnal passions, then Heaven shall definitely be his abode."* [*Surah 80, verses 40,4 1*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه once recited the verse, *"The one who*

fears standing in the presence of his Lord shall have two gardens." He then said, "There shall be two gardens of gold for the forerunners in Islām and two gardens of silver for those who followed them." [*"Mustadrak" of Hākim*]

Allāh describes the two gardens by saying, *"Both these (gardens) shall be filled with branches."* There shall be an abundance of green and lush branches in these gardens, indicating that they will be filled with an abundance of fruit. The second description states that *"In both (gardens) there shall be two gushing springs."* In addition to providing refreshing water, the springs shall provide a scenic setting to watch. The springs of Heaven are described in Surah Dahar (*Surah 76*) and Surah Tatfīf (*Surah 83*). Surah Dahar [*Surah 76, verse 18*] states that the name of one spring is *"Salsābīl "* while Surah Tatfīf [*Surah 83, verse 26*] states that the other spring is called "Tasnīm . Allāh states in verses 5 and 6 of Surah Dahar, *"The good shall certainly drink from a cup the mixture of which is camphor. The springs from which Allāh 's bondsmen shall drink they shall cause to gush forth abundantly."*

Allāh describes the third characteristic of these gardens when He says, *'in both there shall be a pair of every fruit.* The one type of fruit will be similar to what we see in this world while the other will be seen only in Heaven. Some commentators mention that the one type of fruit will be fresh while the other type will be dried. However, both will be equal in taste. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the *"pair"* refers to the sweet and sour fruit that are found in this world, which will be found in Heaven. However, bitter fruit like the wild gourd (bitter apple) shall be sweet in Heaven. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 27 p. 117*]

THE BEDDING OF THE RIGHTEOUS IN HEAVEN

Further describing the bounties awaiting the righteous in Heaven, Allāh speaks about their bedding and wives. Allāh says, *"The people (of Heaven) shall recline on bedding lined with thick silk."* This verse tells us that inner lining of this bedding will be made of thick silk. In this world, the outer lining of a bedding is usually decorated and made from material that is far more expensive than the material used for the inner lining. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه said, *"You have been told that the inner linings of the beddings of Heaven are made from thick silk. You can then well imagine how beautiful and comfortable the outer linings are!"* [*Hākim*]

Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه said, *"The inner lining is thick silk."* If you want to know what the outer lining shall be made of then recite the verse of Surah Alif Lām Mīm Sajdah where Allāh says, *"No soul knows what pleasures are hidden for him as a reward for the deeds he carries out.'"* This means that nothing can be said about the beauty of the outer lining. One will know the reality of this only in Heaven.

Allāh continues, *"The fruit of both gardens shall be extremely close."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned that if Allāh's friends in Heaven wish to pluck fruit while standing they may do so. They may also pluck fruit while sitting or even while lying down. In every condition, the fruit will be close by. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

THE WIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF JANNAH (*HEAVEN*)

The men of Heaven shall have their worldly wives in Heaven as well as wives from the *"Hūr Īn"*. These wives will be extremely beautiful and shall have eyes for none other than their husbands. Allāh refers to this when he says, *'in these gardens there shall be maidens with lowered gazes"*. In addition to this, *"no man or Jinn has ever touched"* them. Describing their beauty, Allāh says that *"They seem to appear like rubies and pearls."* The explanation of the Arabic word *"Marjān"* (translated above as *"pearls "*) has been discussed in the commentary of verse 22 of this Surah. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه states that the complexions of these maidens will be as clear as rubies and as white as pearls. Other commentators state that the complexion of their faces will resemble rubies, while the rest of their bodies will be the colour of pearl.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the faces of the first group to enter Heaven will shine like the fourteenth moon while the faces of the next group will shine like a bright star. Each person shall have two damsels of Heaven as wives. (Their complexions will be so beautifully clear that) the marrow of their shins will be visible through their skin and flesh. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 461*]

A narration of Tirmidhi states that even though the damsels will be wearing seventy sets of clothing, the marrow of their bones will be visible to the onlooker. [*"Mishkāt" p. 497*]

The two damsels that the hadith of Bukhari mention will be the minimum number a person will marry. According to a person's deeds, he will marry as many as Allāh pleases. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person with the lowest status in Heaven shall be given eighty thousand servants and seventy-two wives. Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه writes in his commentary that two of these wives shall be wives from this world and the other seventy shall be from the damsels of Heaven. Allāh knows best.

"Can the reward for good be anything but good?" The reward for the person who lived a good life, who worshipped Allāh only, who abstained from polytheism *(shirk)* and who carried out good deeds shall be good indeed. He will be blessed with Heaven and all the bounties of Heaven. In a hadith of Muslim, the Arabic word *"ihsān" (translated* above as *"good")* has been defined as *"worshipping Allāh as if one can see Him, and if one is unable to do this, one should be mindful of the fact that Allāh is watching him. "*? The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said this in reply to a question posed by Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام.

(62) Lesser than these two gardens are another two gardens. (63) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (64) Both dark green. (65) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (66) Both have gushing springs. (67) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (68) In both are fruits, date palms and pomegranates. (69) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (70) In them are marvellous and stunning women. (71) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (72) Fair damsels sheltered in tents. (73) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (74) Neither any man nor Jinn has ever touched them. (75) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (76) The people of Heaven shall recline on green decorated and exceptionally beautiful bedding. (77) So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny? (78) Blessed is the name of your Lord, the Possessor of majesty and benevolence.

THE VARIOUS OTHER LEVELS OF HEAVEN

The above verses mention the other levels of Heaven apart from the two mentioned earlier. All of these are of lesser eminence than the first two and will be awarded to people whose deeds and spiritual status are of a lesser degree than the people who will occupy the first two gardens of Heaven. Surah Wā'qiah which follows Surah Rahmān speaks of the two groups to enter Heaven, who are referred to as the *"Sābiqūn"* and the *"As 'hābul Yamīn*. The Heaven mentioned in the above verses will be given to the *"As'hābul Yamīn"* and the first two gardens will be for the *"Sābiqūn"*.

Describing the next two levels of Heaven, Allāh says that both will be *"dark green*. The Arabic word *'Mudhāmatān"* actually refers to something that is black. The word is used here because the gardens of Heaven are so lush and dark green in colour that they appear to be black. The single word *'Mudhāmatān"* completes this entire verse and this is therefore the only verse of the Qur'ān that contains only one word.

Allāh describes further, *"Both have gushing springs."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه states that these two springs will shower prosperity and blessings on the people of Heaven. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه state that these springs will bring a fine mist of fragrance into the homes of the people in Heaven. Other commentators state that they will run with gushing water which will never come to an end. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

"In both are fruits, date palms and pomegranates." One cannot imagine these to be like those we see in this world because everything in Heaven will be exclusive to Heaven and share only their names with the fruit of this world. Just like the rest of the Surah, Allāh reminds man and Jinn to be grateful to Him by repeating,

"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"

THE WIVES OF HEAVEN

Allāh states that the gardens of Heaven have *"marvellous and stunning women."* Sayyidina Ibn Salamah رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the women of Heaven are *"marvellous"* in character and *"stunning"* in beauty. Referring to the fact that these women will be reserved for their husbands, Allāh states; *"Fair damsels sheltered in tents."*

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "if a damsel of Heaven has to peek into this world, she would illuminate the atmosphere between the sky and the earth and fill it with her fragrance. It is a fact that the scarf on her head is more valuable than the earth and all its contents." [*"Mishkāt" p. 495 from Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The tent of a believers in Heaven shall be carved from a single hollow pearl. The tent shall be sixty miles wide (or 60 miles long according to another narration). He shall have a wife in each corner and the one will be unable to see the other as he goes to each one. The believers shall have two gardens of silver where the utensils and everything else will be made of silver. They shall also have two gardens of gold where the utensils and everything else will be made of gold. Only the veil of honour shall separate the person of Heaven from seeing his Lord. All this shall be in the eternal garden of paradise." [*"Mishkāt" p. 495 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Describing the purity of the damsels of Heaven, Allāh says, *"Neither any man nor Jinn has ever touched them."*

After describing the women of Heaven Allāh says, *"The people of Heaven shall recline on green decorated and exceptionally beautiful bedding." "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that the word "Abqariy" (translated above as "decorated") refers to everything good that one is proud to have. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once referred to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه as "Abqariy".

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Blessed is the name of your Lord, the Possessor of majesty and benevolence.* "While the 27th verse of the Surah describes Allāh as *"the Possessor of majesty and benevolence"*, the Surah ends with the same description of Allāh's grandeur.

SOME NOTES CONCERNING SURAH RAHMĀN

NOTE 1: The verse *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"* is repeated 31 times in the Surah. By reciting the verse continuously, the reader feels a sense of joy and is spiritually enlightened. Even those listening to the recitation experience a sense of elation and happiness. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم referred to Surah Rahmān as the bridegroom of the Qur'ān. [*"Mishkāt" p. 189*]

NOTE 2: Allāh reminds man and Jinn of His favours in the verse *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you den y?"* Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله

عنه narrates that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited Surah Rahmān to the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم, they all listened in silence. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said to them, *"When I recited this Surah to the Jinn on the night I met with them, they seemed to have a better reply than you. Whenever I recited the verse 'So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?' they responded by saying:*

{TRANSLATION: "We do not deny any of Your favours, O our Lord. All praise belongs to You."} [Tirmidhi]

Appreciation of Allāh's favours entails admitting these favours and using them in a manner that pleases Him. Denying Allāh's favours means that one says that one did not receive a certain favour from Allāh or that one says that what one has are the fruits of one's labours. Similarly, adopting an attitude that reveals this will also be tantamount to denying Allāh's favours.

NOTE 3: Why does Allāh say, *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"* after verses that portray His punishment as well? How can punishment be regarded as a favour? The answer is that Allāh's favour lies in His warning people of the consequences of evil. By mentioning the punishment for evil deeds, Allāh is warning people to refrain from such deeds so that they never find themselves suffering the same. This forewarning is an act of great kindness.

NOTE 4: Allāh makes it clear in verse 56 of Surah Dhāriyāt (*Surah 51*): *"I have created man and Jinn only to worship Me."* Allāh has created both these creations for the purpose of worshipping Him, His bounties are tremendous to both and He has sent guidance to both. However, because Allāh has selected man as His vicegerent on earth, man is superior to Jinn. Nevertheless, both are responsible for fulfilling Allāh's commands. Whether Allāh sent Anbiya *(The Holy Prophets* عليهم السلام) among the Jinn, the difference of opinion has been discussed in the commentary of verse 130 of Surah An'ām (*Surah 6*). What is certain is that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent as messenger, he was the messenger to both man and Jinn. This is evident from the verses of Surah Rahmān and the verses of Surah Ahqāf [*Surah 46, verses 29-32*] in which Allāh quotes the invitation that the Jinn extended to their fellow Jinn after listening to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says that the believer Jinn said to their fellow Jinn: *"O our people! Respond to Allāh 's caller and believe in him; Allāh will forgive your sins and save you from a painful punishment."* [*Surah 46, verse 31*]

The details of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم meeting with the Jinn have been discussed in the commentary of the above verses of Surah Ahqāf. Further details will also be mentioned in the commentary of Surah Jinn (*Surah 72*), Insha Allāh.

NOTE 5: The Jinn are also obliged to worship Allāh and the disbelievers

among them will also be sent to Hell. Allāh says in Surah Sajdah, *"If We willed, We would have granted every soul its guidance.. However, the decree has issued from Me that I will surely fill Hell with a collection of man and Jinn."* [*Surah 32, verse 13*]

Whereas it is clear that the disbelieving Jinn will enter Hell, some Muhaddithīn (commentators of Ahadīth) and Mufassirīn (commentators of Qur'ān) have queried whether the believing Jinn will enter Heaven. This question is answered by the fact that when discussing the bounties of Heaven, Allāh states *"So which favours of your Lord do the two of you deny?"* This makes it clear that the Jinn may also enter Heaven. The Scholar *(Allāma)* Shibli رحمة الله عليه favours this opinion in his renowned book about the Jinn titled *"Ākāmul Marjān"* (Chapter 24). Together with this opinion, he also cites another opinion that the Jinn will be allowed only up to the doors of Heaven from where humans will be able to see them without them being able to see the humans in Heaven. The third opinion he cites is that the believer Jinn will remain on the A'rāf (the place between Heaven and Hell). He has quoted a hadith to substantiate this opinion. The third opinion is one of silence i.e. no comment can be made about the issue.

NOTE 6: The 27th and the final verse of the Surah mention Allāh's quality of being *"Dhul Jalāli wal Ikrām" ("the Possessor of majesty and benevolence").* The explanation of this has been given in the commentary of verse 27. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised that Muslims recite *"Dhul Jalāli wal Ikrām"* abundantly and use it in their Supplication. [*Hākim v. 1 p. 499*]

Sayyidina Thowbān رضى الله عنه reports that after the Fardh (obligatory) Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite:

{TRANSLATION : O Allāh! You Peace and all peace comes from you. You are Blessed, O "Dhul Jalāli wal Ikrām" (the Possessor of majesty and benevolence)} [Muslim.]

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once heard a person saying in his supplication, *"Yā Dhal Jalāli wal Ikrām!"* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to the person, "Your du'ā (*pray*) is accepted. Now ask what you please." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that he was once sitting with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when another person completed his Salāh and said:

{TRANSLATION: O Allāh! I am supplicating to You because all praise belongs to you and there is none worthy of worship besides you., You are the most Benevolent and the Creator of the heavens and the earth. O Dhul Jalāli wal Ikrām (Possessor of majesty and benevolence)!}

After hearing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "He has supplicated by that name of Allāh with which a person is granted whatever he asks." [*Abu Dawūd p. 210*]

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) When Judgement day (Qiyāmah) will take place... (2) ...there shall be none to deny its advent. (3) It will lower and elevate. (4) When the earth shall convulse with violent earthquakes. (5) And the mountains will be shattered to pieces... (6) ...and become like scattered dust. (7) You people will then be in three groups.

JUDGEMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)* WILL LOWER AND ELEVATE

This Surah discusses the advent of Judgement day *(Qiyāmah)* and the rewards and punishment that people will witness after being dispatched to Heaven and Hell. Allāh begins by saying, *"When Judgement day (Qiyāmah) will take place there shall be none to deny its advent."* Many people deny the coming of Judgement day *(Qiyāmah)* when the Anbiya (The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام) and the divine scriptures have clearly informed them about it. However, when people will actually witness Judegment day taking place, none shall be able to deny it.

Those who deny Judgement day will then exclaim, *"O our Lord! We have seen and we have heard. Return us so that we may carry out good deeds. We are now certainly convinced."* [*Surah Sajdah (32), verse* 12]

Describing the Day of Judgement, Allāh says, *"It will lower and elevate."* There are many people in this world who enjoy high social standing and may even be kings, ministers and leaders. However, because they die as disbelievers or as sinners, they will be disgraced and lowered on the Day of Judgement. The punishment and reckoning of the Day of Judgement will strip them of all the pride they possessed in this world. On the other hand, there are those who are trampled in this world and looked down upon. However, because they are people of Belief, are righteous and carry out good deeds, they will be elevated on

the Day of Judgement. There shall be many of them whose reckoning will be extremely easy while others will enter Heaven without any reckoning at all.

Allāh Ta'āla reminds people of the Day of Judgement *"When the earth shall convulse with violent earthquakes. And the mountains will be shattered to pieces and become like scattered dust."* Everything in the universe will be reduced to nothing.

"You people will then be in three groups. " These three groups are:

1. "Sābiqūn" (the forerunners) who are also referred to as the "Muqarrabūn" (those brought close).
2. "The average believers who are referred to as the "As'hābul Yamīn" (the people of the right). Both these two groups are collectively referred to as the "As' hābul Maymana".
3. the disbelievers who are referred to as the "As' hābush Shimāl" (the people of the left).

فَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ (8) وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ (9)
وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ (10) أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ (11) فِى جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ (12) ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ
(13) وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِينَ (14) عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ (15) مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَٰبِلِينَ (16)
يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَٰنٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ (17) بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ (18) لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا
وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ (19) وَفَٰكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ (20) وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ (21) وَحُورٌ عِينٌ
(22) كَأَمْثَٰلِ ٱللُّؤْلُؤِ ٱلْمَكْنُونِ (23) جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ (24) لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا
تَأْثِيمًا (25) إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَٰمًا سَلَٰمًا (26) وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْيَمِينِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْيَمِينِ (27) فِى سِدْرٍ
مَّخْضُودٍ (28) وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ (29) وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ (30) وَمَآءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ (31) وَفَٰكِهَةٍ
كَثِيرَةٍ (32) لَّا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ (33) وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ (34) إِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَٰهُنَّ إِنشَآءً (35)
فَجَعَلْنَٰهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا (36) عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا (37) لِّأَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ (38) ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ (39)
وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِينَ (40)

(8) So the people of the right; how excellent are the people of the right! (9) And the people of the left; how wretched are the people of the left! (10)The forerunners are the forerunners. (11) These are indeed those brought close. (12) They will be in gardens of bliss. (13) A large group from among the earlier ones. (14) A few from among the later ones. (15) They will be on woven thrones. (16) Reclining on these facing each other. (17) Youngsters of eternal youth shall wait

on them... (18) ... with goblets and jugs and glasses filled with flowing wine. (19) Neither will they have headaches with, nor will they be intoxicated. (20) And (they will be served) a variety of fruits to choose from... (21) ... and the meat of the birds they desire. (22) And (they shall have) fair large eyed damsels... (23) ... who are like preserved pearls. (24) (All of this) as a reward for the deeds they carried out. (25) They will not hear any noise there nor any foolish talk. (26) Instead they will hear the resonant call of "Peace", "Peace (27) And the people of the right, how excellent are the people of the right! (28) They will be in (gardens of) thorn less lotus trees... (29) ... and bananas stacked high. (30) (They will be) in extensive shade. (31) And flowing water. (32) And an abundance of fruit... (33) ... that will not come to an end and will not be restricted. (34) And elevated thrones. (35) Indeed We have created these damsels very specially. (36) And We have made them all virgins... (37) ... most beloved and of equal age... (38) ... .for the people of the right. (39) A large group from among the early ones. (40) A large group from among the later ones.

THE THREE GROUPS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

The above verses discuss the *"people of the right"* who will all enter Heaven. These are further classified into the *'Muqarrabūn"* ("those brought close") and the average believers. Allāh briefly describes the broad categories of the good and the evil when He says, *"So the people of the right; how excellent are the people of the right! And the people of the left; how wretched are the people of the left!"*

The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that these people are referred to as *"the people of the right"* because they will receive their records of deeds in their right hands. They may also be termed *"the people of the right"* because they will proceed towards the right of the Plain of Resurrection after judgement is passed. The author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* quotes a third opinion. He says that when Allāh Ta'āla removed the souls of mankind from the back of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, the souls of these people went to the right and Allāh said that He had created them for Heaven. Other commentators state that the word *"Maymana"* (translated above as *"right")* is derived from the root word *"Yumn"* which means *"blessed/fortunate*. These people have been given this title because they are truly blessed and most fortunate.

The opposite of these people are the *"people of the left"*. The reasons for referring to them in this way are the opposite of those mentioned above. Therefore, they shall be the ones to receive their records of deeds in their left hands. They will proceed towards the left of the Plain of Resurrection after judgement is passed and when Allāh Ta'āla removed the souls of mankind from the back of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, the souls of these people went to the left and Allāh said that He had created them for Hell. It may also be said that the word *'Mash'ama"* (translated above as *"left")* is derived from the root word *"Shum"* which means *"wretched/unfortunate*.

Allāh then describes the "Sābiqūn" ('forerunners") when He states, *"The forerunners are the forerunners. These are indeed those brought close (Mu qarrabūn)."* The *"Sābiqūn"* are from among the "people of the right" but have been granted a greater status than the rest of the "As 'habul Maymana" ("people of the right") because they led the rest in Belief and good deeds. They will receive additional

bounties in Heaven compared to the rest of the "people of the right".

WHO ARE THE "SĀBIQŪN"?

"The forerunners are the forerunners. These are indeed those brought close." Who are these Sābiqūn (forerunners)? The following opinions have been quoted:

A. *Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās* رضى الله عنه *states that these people are forerunners in making Hijrah (migrating).*

B. *Sayyidina Ikrima* رضى الله عنه *says that these people were the first to accept Islām.*

C. *Sayyidina Ibn Sīrīn* رحمة الله عليه *has mentioned that these are the early Muslims who performed Sahāh facing the two Qiblas viz. Baytul Muqaddas and the Ka'ba.*

D. *Sayyidina Rabī bin Anas* رحمة الله عليه *says that these are the believers who were first to carry out the commands of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم.

E. *Sayyidina Ali* رضى الله عنه *says that these are the people who are the first to leave for Salāh.*

F. *Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubayr* رحمة الله عليه *says that these are the people who hasten to repent and to carry out good deeds. Describing many attributes of the true believers, Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Mu'minūn, "These people hasten to perform good deeds and are the forerunners in this." [Surah 23, verse 61]*

There is no contradiction in the above interpretations of the Sābiqūn. However, the interpretation of Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubayr رحمة الله عليه seems most comprehensive because it includes all the others.

THE GREATEST BOUNTY FOR THE "SĀBIQŪN"

Allāh says about the Sābiqūn, *"These are indeed those brought close."* There is no bounty superior to being close to Allāh. In addition to this *"They will be in gardens of bliss."* Allāh Ta'āla then briefly states the numbers of people who will belong to this group. Allāh says, *"A large group from among the earlier ones. A few from among the later ones."*

The *"earlier ones"* refers to the Ummahs prior to this Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, while *"the later ones"* refers to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. These verses therefore tell us that the majority of people in this *"Sābiqūn/ Muqarrabūn"* group will be from nations prior to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Although the number of people from the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this group will be very large, they will still be fewer than those belonging to previous Ummahs. It should be borne in mind that all the Anbiya (The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام) are also included in the rank of the Sābiqūn together with the members of each Prophet's عليه السلام Ummah. This does not necessarily mean that the number of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم

Ummah is less than the collective number of the previous Ummahs.

Sayyidina Buraydah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "There will be 120 rows of people entering Heaven. Of these, 80 rows will be from my Ummah and the other 40 rows will be people from all the other Ummahs." [*"Mishkāt"*]

ADDITIONAL BOUNTIES FOR THE SĀBIQŪN

Allāh continues to say that the Sābiqūn *"will be on woven thrones."* This verse does not state from what the thrones will be woven. Mufassirīn mention that they will be woven with golden thread and studded with gems. The people of Heaven will be *"Reclining on these facing each other."* In this manner they will be able to speak to each other without anyone's back facing another.

In addition to this, *"Youngsters of eternal youth shall wait on them with goblets and jugs and glasses filled with flowing wine."* These waiters will remain youthful forever and will always serve the people of Heaven. In Surah Tūr, Allāh speaks about these youth in the following words: *"Their youngsters shall wait on them, appearing to be concealed pearls."* [*Surah 52, verse 24*]

Pure wine will be served to the people of Heaven. In Surah Muhammad [*Surah 47, verse 15*], Allāh describes this wine as *"extremely palatable to those who drink it."* One should not think that this wine will be harmful like the wines of this world because Allāh adds, *"Neither will they have headaches with it, nor will they be intoxicated."*

After mentioning the drinks, Allāh speaks of the food of Heaven when he says, *"And (they will be served) a variety of fruits to choose from and the meat of the birds they desire."*

Continuing the discussion of Heaven's bounties, Allāh says, *"And (they shall have) fair large eyed damsels."* After describing the beauty of these women in these words, Allāh says that the clarity and texture of their complexion is *"like preserved pearls*. Allāh then says that all these bounties are *"a reward for the deeds they carried out."*

It is often the case in this world that a person enjoys prosperity, has beauty and also wives and children. However, he is still plagued by noise and disturbances that interrupt his rest. Often, he is unable to stop the disturbances and is forced to tolerate them. This will not be the case in Heaven. Allāh Ta'āla says, *"They will not hear any noise there nor any foolish talk. Instead they will hear the resonant call of 'Peace', 'Peace'."* These greetings of peace will be from Allāh, as mentioned in Surah Yāsīn where Allāh says, *"They will have a greeting of peace from the Most Merciful Lord."* The people of Heaven will also be greeting each other with words of Salām (peace) as mentioned in Surah Yunus: *"their greeting (in Heaven) will be Salām."* In addition to this, the angels will even be greeting the people of Heaven. Allāh says in Surah Ra'd, *"(The angels will be saying) 'Peace be upon you because of the patience that you exercised. How blissful is the outcome of the Hereafter!*

THE BOUNTIES OF THE "AS'HĀBUL YAMĪN"

Allāh speaks of the As'hābul Yamīn (the people of the right) when He says, *"And the people of the right, how excellent are the people of the right! They will be in (gardens of) thorn less lotus trees."* Unlike certain species of lotus trees in this world, the trees of Heaven will have no thorns so that none may be injured.

Sayyidina Abu Umāmah رضى الله عنه narrates that a villager once said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Allāh has mentioned a harmful tree in the Qur'ān."* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him what the tree was he replied, "The lotus tree that has thorns. " The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told him, "Allāh mentions "thorn less lotus trees". Allāh shall remove the thorns from this tree and replace every thorn with a fruit. It will bear such fruit that will burst to reveal fruit of 72 colours. No colour will resemble the other." [*Hākim v. 2 p. 474*]

In addition to this, their Heaven shall have *"bananas stacked high*. Everyone is well aware of the pleasure that banana lovers get from this delectable fruit. People cannot even imagine the pleasure that they will derive from the bananas of Heaven. The people of Heaven will enjoy all of this *"in extensive shade*. They will have comfortable shade without having to worry about the heat. The shade of Heaven will be true shade and not the artificial shade of this world It is for this reason that Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"We shall enter them into abundant shade."* [*Surah 4, verse 57*]

The shade of Heaven will be extremely comfortable and one will not feel hot or cold. Allāh says in Surah Dahar, *"They will recline on couches there (in Heaven) and will not feel heat or cold."* [*Surah 76, verse 13*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is a tree in Heaven that is so large that it will take a rider a hundred years to pass (through the shadow)." [*Bukhari*]

Allāh continues to say that Heaven shall have *'flowing water "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* [*v. 4 p. 140*] mentions that the rivers of Heaven will run on the surface of the ground without requiring furrows in the ground to travel. The water will flow in whichever direction one desires. There will be no need for a bucket and rope either to reach the water.

The *"people of the right"* shall also enjoy *"an abundance of fruit that will not come to an end and will not be restricted."* They will be able to eat whatever fruit they desire in whatever quantity they desire. It is reported in a hadith that as soon as a person plucks a fruit of Heaven another fruit will grow in its place immediately. [*Majma'uz Zawāid v. 1 p. 414*]

The As'habul Yamīn will relax on *"elevated thrones"*. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the *"elevated thrones"* will be as high as the distance between the heavens and the earth i.e. the distance of 500 years journey. [*"Mishkāt" p. 497 from Tirmidhi*]

OLD WOMEN SHALL BE YOUNG IN HEAVEN

Allāh then describes the women of Heaven. Apart from the "Hūr Īn" of Heaven (who are a special creation), Allāh shall make the believers women of

this world the wives of the people of Heaven. Believers women who passed away in old age, those who passed away young, those who were unmarried and those who were married will all be made wives of the men of Heaven. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that every person who passed away either young or old shall be made thirty years of age in Heaven. Thereafter, their age shall not advance. [*"Mishkāt" p. 499*]

Therefore, even old women who passed away as believers will be made young again in Heaven. Allāh refers to this when he says, *"indeed We have created these damsels very specially. And We have made them all virgins, most beloved and of equal age for the people of the right." The women of Heaven shall be attractive, extremely beloved to their husbands and equal in age.*

THE STORY OF AN OLD SAHĀBI LADY

"Shamā'il Tirmidhi" reports that an old lady once asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Pray that Allāh enters me into Heaven. "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to her, "Old women will not enter Heaven." Hearing this the old woman left weeping. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent someone after her with the message that she will not be old when she enters Heaven. She will be transformed into a young lady because Allāh states, *"indeed We have created these damsels very specially. And We have made them all virgins, most beloved and of equal age for the people of the right."*

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained the verse *"indeed We have created these damsels very specially"*, he said, "Among the women whom Allāh shall specially create are those women who are purblind in this world and those whose eyes secrete a white fluid (because of some ailment)." In the context of this hadith, a purblind woman is a woman whose eyes do not open fully and they constantly tear.

In this group there shall be *"A large group from among the early ones. (and) A large group from among the later ones."*

وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلشِّمَالِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلشِّمَالِ (41) فِى سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ (42) وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ (43) لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ (44) إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَبْلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ (45) وَكَانُوا۟ يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى ٱلْحِنثِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ (46) وَكَانُوا۟ يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ (47) أَوَءَابَآؤُنَا ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ (48) قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ وَٱلْءَاخِرِينَ (49) لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَىٰ مِيقَٰتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ (50) ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا ٱلضَّآلُّونَ ٱلْمُكَذِّبُونَ (51) لَءَاكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ (52) فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا ٱلْبُطُونَ (53) فَشَٰرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْحَمِيمِ (54) فَشَٰرِبُونَ شُرْبَ ٱلْهِيمِ (55) هَٰذَا نُزُلُهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ (56)

(41) And the people of the left, how wretched are the people of the left! (42)

They shall be in a fierce scorching wind, boiling water... (43)... and the shade of black smoke... (44) ... that will neither be cool nor hospitable. (45) Verily these people used to be affluent before. (46) They used to persistently carry out major sins. (47) They used to say, "After we die and have become sand and bones, will we then be resurrected?" (48) "Or our early forefathers?" (49) Say, "Indeed the early ones and the latter ones... (50) ....shall certainly be gathered for an appointment of a known day. (51) Then, O you deviated falsifiers... (52) ....you shall surely eat from the Zaqqūm tree. (53) And you shall fill your bellies with it. (54) You shall drink boiling water upon it... (55) .... and you shall drink like thirsty camels." (56) This is the hospitality they will receive on the Day of Reckoning.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE "PEOPLE OF THE LEFT"

These verses refer to the torment that the *"As 'hābush Shimāl"* (*"people of the left"*) will suffer in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. At the beginning of the Surah (*verse 9*), they were referred to as *"As'hābul Mash'ama"*. Allāh says, *"And the people of the left, how wretched are the people of the left! They shall be in a fierce scorching wind, boiling water and the shade of black smoke that will neither be cool nor hospitable."* This *"shade of black smoke"* is in contrast to the *"extensive shade"* that the *"people of the right"* shall enjoy as mentioned in verse 30 above. Whereas the shade for the people of Heaven shall be comfortable, the shade for the people of Hell will provide torment instead of comfort.

THE MISCHIEF OF THE DISBELIEVERS IN THIS WORLD

Referring to the people of Hell, Allāh says, *"Verily these people used to be affluent before."* Their lives of prosperity in this world shall be the cause of their destruction. In the stupor of their wealth and positions, they did not believe and were not inclined to turn to Allāh. They regarded their comfortable lives as everything and gave no thought to their plight in the Ākhirah (Hereafter). In addition to this, *"They used to persistently carry out major sins."* They adamantly clung to disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)* and pledged never to waver from their ways and to die as they were.

Not only were these people averse to accepting Belief, they were also opposed to the belief of resurrection. Allāh says, *"They used to say, 'After we die and have become sand and bones, will we then be resurrected? Or our early forefathers?"* They regard the advent of Judgement as something impossible. By this statement, they meant to say that they might still believe someone who says that they will be brought back to life immediately after dying. However, they thought it impossible that even their earlier forefathers would be resurrected on the Day of Judgement when they had died such a long time ago and their bodies would have been reduced to nothing.

In response to their denial, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them, *'Indeed the early ones and the latter ones shall certainly be gathered for an appointment of a known day."* Judgement day is a certainty and every person shall be raised then to render an account of their deeds to Allāh Ta'āla. The punishment that the disbelievers will suffer in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is then mentioned when Allāh says, *"Then, O you deviated falsifiers, you shall surely eat*

from the Zaqqūm tree. And you shall fill your bellies with it." The Zaqqūm tree is an extremely bitter and hideous looking tree in Hell which the people there will be forced to eat because of their extreme hunger. Not only will they eat a little to appease their hunger, but they will fill their bellies with it. This will add to their suffering.

The disbelievers are further told, *"You shall drink boiling water upon it and you shall drink like thirsty camels."* Allāh concludes the discussion of the people of Hell by stating, *"This is the hospitality they will receive on the Day of Reckoning."*

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُونَ ﴿57﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تُمْنُونَ ﴿58﴾ ءَأَنتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُونَ ﴿59﴾ نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ ﴿60﴾ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ أَمْثَٰلَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِى مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿61﴾ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ ٱلنَّشْأَةَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿62﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ ﴿63﴾ ءَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلزَّٰرِعُونَ ﴿64﴾ لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَٰهُ حُطَٰمًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ ﴿65﴾ إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُونَ ﴿66﴾ بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿67﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱلْمَآءَ ٱلَّذِى تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿68﴾ ءَأَنتُمْ أَنزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُنزِلُونَ ﴿69﴾ لَوْ نَشَآءُ جَعَلْنَٰهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿70﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِى تُورُونَ ﴿71﴾ ءَأَنتُمْ أَنشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَآ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُنشِـُٔونَ ﴿72﴾ نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَٰهَا تَذْكِرَةً وَمَتَٰعًا لِّلْمُقْوِينَ ﴿73﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿74﴾

(57) We have created you, so why do you not accept? (58) Tell me about the seed that you issue forth. (59) Do you create the child or are We the Creators? (60) We have decreed death among you and We are not helpless... (61) .... to replace you with others like you and make you into forms that you have no knowledge of. (62) You have perfect knowledge of the first creation, so why do you not take heed? (63) Tell me about what you plant. (64) Do you make it grow or are We the Ones who make it grow? (65) If We wish We could reduce it to bits and leave you astounded... (66) ...(saying) "We are being taxed." (67) "Rather, we are deprived." (68) Tell me about the water you drink. (69) Do you cause it to rain from the clouds or is it We Who cause it to rain? (70) If We willed it, We could have made the water salty, so why are you not grateful? (71) Tell me about the fire that you kindle. (72) Did you create the tree (to make the fire) or is it We Who created it? (73) We have made it as a reminder and as a source of benefit to the travellers. (74) So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord.

WHO CREATED MAN AND PROVIDED THE MEANS FOR HIS EXISTENCE?

After mentioning the three types of people to be grouped in the Ākhirah

(Hereafter), Allāh speaks about the creation of man and the various things that facilitate his existence in this world. Although the rejecters are addressed, the reminder is for all. Allāh says, *"We have created you, so why do you not accept?"* Allāh says in Surah Dahar [*Surah 76, verse 1*], *"Undoubtedly, a moment in time has passed by man when he was not even something worth mentioning."* Man accepts that he was once nothing and none even knew about his birth. Thereafter, it was Allāh who brought him into existence. If Allāh is perfectly Capable of creating man the first time, he is surely able to do so the second time on the Day of Judgement.

At the same time it is necessary to understand that Allāh has created man and that He sent the Anbiya (The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام) for man's guidance and has given man the option to act. It is therefore necessary that He appoints a day for reckoning when people will be granted their rewards or doomed for punishment. (Otherwise the option to do good and abstain from evil is pointless because people will have a free reign to do as they please and justice will never be seen). It is therefore logical that the Day of Judgement has to take place. Despite this, some people still regard Judgement day as an impossibility.

The first man was created from sand, after which the generations issued forth by procreation. Allāh has determined the process of procreation to take place when the sperm of a man meets the egg of a woman. At this stage, a child is conceived to be later born a complete child. With reference to this Allāh says, *"Tell me about the seed that you issue forth. Do you create the child or are We the Creators?"*

When a husband and wife cohabit, there is no guarantee that a child will be conceived. Conception takes place when Allāh wills. When this does happen, it is only Allāh who sees to the nourishment and development of the child and ensures that the child is born healthy. It often happens that a child is conceived but dies before being born. Only Allāh decides whether a child is born with a deformity or not. Man has no control over these matters. The fact that Allāh is the only One who decides these matters proves that He is the Master and Controller. Yet many men refuse to yield to Him and do not accept the guidance He sent with the Prophets عليهم السلام.

Allāh says further, *"We have decreed death among you"*. Allāh determines when a person will die and man has no say in the matter and has to leave the world when his time expires.

".... and We are not helpless to (destroy you and) replace you with others like you and make you into forms that you have no knowledge of." Allāh has the ability to transform people into any form he desires whenever He desires. Therefore, no man should regard himself to be indispensable and should fear to sin.

"You have perfect knowledge of the first creation, so why do you not take heed?" It is not difficult for man to realise that just as Allāh created him the first time, Allāh is Powerful enough to resurrect him on the Day of Judgement. After creating man the first time, Allāh still retains the power to repeat the process. Allāh says in Surah Qāf, *"Did We get tired with the first creation? Nay, but they are in doubt concerning the new creation."* [*Surah 50, verse 15*]

THE BOUNTY OF PLANTATIONS

Allāh says further, *"Tell me about what you plant."* Man prepares the land for plantation and then plants the seeds of the crop he desires. Thereafter, who sees to it that the seed germinates and grows? Allāh asks, *"Do you make it grow or are We the Ones who make it grow?"* After the seed is placed in the ground, it is Allāh who decides whether it should grow and to what extent it should grow. Even if the crop grows well, it is again Allāh Who will decide whether man should derive benefit from the crop. Allāh says, *"If We wish We could reduce it to bits and leave you astounded (saying) 'We are being taxed. Rather, we are deprived."'* If Allāh sends a calamity to destroy the crop, people complain that all their efforts in tilling and planting were lost.

THE BOUNTY OF RAIN

"Tell me about the water you drink. Do you cause it to rain from the clouds or is it We Who cause it to rain?" Man has no say in the falling of the rain. When man is desperately in need of rain, he stares at the sky in hope. Eventually, Allāh sends him the much needed rain. Allāh says in Surah Shura, *'it is He Who sends the rain after people have lost hope, and distributes His mercy."* [*Surah 42, verse 28*]

Allāh says further, *"If We will We could have made the water salty."* Allāh could have easily made the water unpalatable so that no man or animal could drink. However, through His mercy, Allāh made the water tasty and refreshing. Man is also able to use this water to wash himself, his clothing and many other things. It is therefore imperative that he expresses gratitude to Allāh for all of this. Reminding man of this favour, Allāh asks, *"so why are you not grateful?"*

FIRE IS ALSO A GREAT BOUNTY

Fire is indispensable to man for its multitude of uses. Discussing this favour to man, Allāh says, *"Tell me about the fire that you kindle. Did you create the tree (to make the fire) or is it We Who created it? We have made it as a reminder and as a source of benefit to the travellers."* The Arabs used a certain tree to strike a fire just as people are able to do so by using stones as flints. Referring to this is Surah Yāsīn, Allāh says, "He (Allāh) Who created fire for you from a green tree, from which you suddenly kindle fires." [*Surah 36, verse 80*]

Whereas a green tree has a high moisture content that does not allow it to ignite, yet Allāh allows man to make a fire from it. This demonstrates Allāh's great powers; hence the verse states that fire is a *"reminder"* for man. Although fire can be extremely dangerous and harmful, its benefits are too numerous to mention. Even today when cooking and baking are done using electrical appliances, fire is still used extensively in industries and areas that have no electricity. Fire is also a constant *"reminder"* of the fire of Hell, reminding us to abstain from all evil and sin.

Allāh says that He had made fire *"a source of benefit to the travellers."* When people are travelling in remote areas, they light fires when they camp at a place. The fire allows them to cook their food, to stay warm and to keep wild animals away. Another benefit is that a lost traveller can find his way when he sees the light of a fire that others make.

After mentioning all these favour to man, Allāh says, *"So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord."* The Lord Who gave man all these bounties is Pure from all defects and flaws. It is therefore necessary that man glorifies Allāh's purity at all times.

(75) I swear by the "Mawāqi'un Nujūm"**! (76) This is undoubtedly a great oath if you knew. (77) Verily it is the honourable Qur'ān... (78) .... in a preserved book. (79) Only the pure ones may touch it. (80) A revelation from the Lord of the universe. (81) Do you regard this as something trivial? (82) Have you fixed as your shares that you shall deny?**

THE QUR'ĀN IS DEFINITELY A REVELATION FROM ALLĀH

Allāh highlights the grandeur of the Qur'ān in the foregoing verses. Allāh declares, *"I swear by the 'Mawāqi'un Nujūm'! This is undoubtedly a great oath if you knew. Verily it is the honourable Qur'ān in a preserved book."* Commentators mention that the "preserved book" refers to the "Lowhul Mahfūdh" ("The Protected Tablet"), as Allāh says at the end of Surah Burūj [*Surah 85, verses 21, 22*], 'it is the honourable Qur'ān in the protected tablet *(Lowhul Mahfūdh)*." The Lowhul Mahfūdh is called "The Protected Tablet" because it is protected against any changes and alterations.

What is meant by *"Mawāqi'un Nujūm"?* While some commentators state that this refers to the points where the stars set, others maintain that it refers to the points where they rise. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه states that *"Mawāqi'un Nujūm"* refers to the various portions of the Qur'ān. While the word *"Najm* "normally refers to stars, it also refers to parts of something that is completed gradually (much like instalments on a payment). The portions of the Qur'ān would therefore refer to the parts of the Qur'ān that were gradually revealed. Taking an oath by these parts of the Qur'ān, Allāh Ta'āla makes it clear that the Qur'ān is safely protected in the protected tablet *(Lowhul Mahfūdh)* where no man or Jinn can alter it.

Allāh continues, *"Only the pure ones may touch it."* According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه, this means that only the pure angels are allowed access to the "protected tablet *(Lowhul Mahfūdh)*". Allāh then speaks of the Qur'ān when He says that it is *"A revelation from the Lord of the universe."* It is the duty of Allāh's creation that they believe in the Qur'ān, honour it, learn it, memorise it and teach it. However, many people, especially the people of Makkah, did not show due regard for it and treated it very lightly.

Allāh asks them, *"Do you regard this (Qur'ān) as something trivial?"* The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that the word *"Mudhinūn"* (translated above as *"regard ... as something trivial"*) is derived from the root word *'idhān"* which refers to applying oil to leather/skin to soften it. Therefore, the symbolic meaning of the word is that although the disbelievers ought to seriously reflect on the Qur'ān, they have softened their approach to the Qur'ān and treat it like something trivial.

"Have you fixed as your shares that you shall deny?" Instead of being grateful that Allāh had revealed the Qur'ān for their guidance, people refuse to believe in it as if they had already assigned to themselves the task of disbelieving. Therefore, the word which is usually translated as *"sustenance"* is translated as *"share"* or *"gratitude"* in this verse. This translation is appropriate only if it is assumed that the verse is linked to the preceding verses and that it refers to the Qur'ān.

Muslim (*v. 1 p. 59*) narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه when it once rained. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to the prophet's companions (*Sahābah*) رضى الله عنهم, *"This morning some people were grateful while others were ungrateful. Those who said that the rain was Allāh 's mercy were grateful while those were ungrateful who said that it rained because a certain star fell."* It was then that the verses were revealed where Allāh says, *"I swear by the 'Mawāqi'un Nujūm' ... Have you fixed as your shares that you shall deny?"*

According to this hadith, the word "Rizq (*Sustenance*)" assumes its original meaning of sustenance. The verse therefore means that instead of being grateful for the rain Allāh sends to people as sustenance, they choose rather to deny that the bounty came from Him. Instead of attributing the bounty to Him, they attribute it to the stars. Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه quotes Sheikh Abu Umar Ibnus Salāh رحمة الله عليه who says that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه does not mean that all the above verses were revealed concerning the incident of the stars. All the verses do not refer to the incident. It is only the verse *"Have you fixed as your shares that you shall deny?"* that was revealed with reference to the incident.

The other verses refer to another subject. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned all the verses because they were revealed simultaneously.

The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* mentions that the above narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه does not contradict the interpretation mentioned earlier concerning the disbeliever's denial of the Qur'ān. This is so because the Qur'ān speaks of the bounties of this world as well as those of the Hereafter. By reading the bounties mentioned in the Qur'ān, people ought to express their gratitude to Allāh. However, they resign themselves rather to refuting Allāh's bounties. As a result of this attitude, they attribute the rain to the falling stars instead of to Allāh even though the Qur'ān constantly repeats the fact that it is only Allāh who sends the rains.

THE LAWS PERTAINING TO RECITING AND TOUCHING THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh Ta'āla declares, *"Only the pure ones may touch it."* Because the verse is phrased as a statement and not a command, commentators interpret the verse to

mean that only the angels who are pure from sin have access to the *"Lowhul Mahfūdh (the protected tablet)"*. Other commentators are of the opinion that the statement has the meaning of a command. Therefore, they interpret the verse to mean that only people who are pure from Hadath Asghar and Hadath Akbar may touch the Qur'ān. This ruling that prohibits people in any of the above two states of impurity from touching the Qur'ān is not based purely on this interpretation of the verse. There are several authentic Ahadīth to substantiate it.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched Sayyidina Amr bin Hazam رضى الله عنه as governor to Yemen, he had many pieces of advice written for him. Among these was the fact that one may not touch the Qur'ān unless one was in a state of purity.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Only the pure may touch the Qur'ān."*

Before touching the Qur'ān it is necessary for one to be pure of Hadath Asghar and Hadath Akbar [i.e. in the state of wudhu (*ablution*) and Ghusl (taking bathe)].

A person in an impure state may touch the Qur'ān if the Qur'ān is covered in something that is not attached to the Qur'ān. If the Qur'ān is in a cover that is sewn or attached to the Qur'ān in some way, an impure person may not touch it.

A woman who is menstruating (*Haidh*) or experiencing afterbirth bleeding (*Nifās*) may neither touch nor recite the Qur'ān, even from memory. The same applies to a person in the state of Hadath Akbar.

A person in the state of Hadath Asghar [i.e. someone without wudhu (*ablution*)] may recite the Qur'ān from memory. If he desires to recite while looking into the Qur'ān, he may turn the pages using a cloth to cover his hands or by using a knife or something else for turning.

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never prohibited anyone from reciting the Qur'ān except the person in the state of Janābah (Hadath Akbar). Women who are bleeding because of menstruation or afterbirth fall into this category because they are required to take a bath.

فَلَوْلَآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلْحُلْقُومَ (83) وَأَنتُمْ حِينَئِذٍ تَنظُرُونَ (84) وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنكُمْ
وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُبْصِرُونَ (85) فَلَوْلَآ إِن كُنتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ (86) تَرْجِعُونَهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ
(87) فَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ (88) فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٍ (89) وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ
مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ (90) فَسَلَٰمٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ (91) وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ (92) فَنُزُلٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ (93) وَتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيمٍ (94) إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ
ٱلْيَقِينِ (95)

(83) Then why do you not (intervene) when the soul reaches the throat... (84) and you are all there watching? (85) We are even nearer to him than you but you fail to see. (86) If you are exempt from reckoning, why do you not... (87) ...return the soul if you are truthful? (88) Therefore, if he was from among those brought close... (89) ... he shall have comfort, sustenance and the garden of bliss. 90. If he was from among the people of right... (91) .... (he will be told), "Peace be on you. You are from the people of the right." (92) However, if he was among the rejecters and deviated ones... (93) ... he will be served boiling water... (94) .... and shall enter the blazing fire. (95) This is most definitely the irrefutable truth.

WHY DO YOU NOT RETURN THE SOUL TO THE BODY AT THE TIME OF DEATH IF YOU ARE EXEMPT FROM RECKONING?

In these verses, Allāh Ta'āla highlights man's helplessness at the time of death and also mentions the plight that each of the three groups of the Hereafter shall experience.

Allāh created man and commanded him to carry out many acts and to abstain from many others. These commands are to test man's obedience to Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Mulk that He *"created life and death to test which of you will carry out the best deeds."* [*Surah 67, verse 2*]

It is therefore evident that death has to follow life, after which people will be tried and given the rewards or punishment they deserve. Man has no say in the matter of death. Allāh has predetermined the length of every person's life and when s/he shall die. None can postpone or prepone this hour. It is impossible to do anything to disrupt Allāh's plan of events.

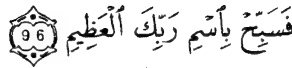
In the above verses, Allāh tells man that when another person is dying and everyone else is watching and sympathising, none of them is able to do anything for the person even though they all wish to save his life. Allāh says that He is closer to the person than those standing around him because Allāh knows the person's physical and spiritual conditions. Allāh asks, *"If you are exempt from reckoning, why do you not return the soul if you are truthful* "Every man has to appear for reckoning and has to leave this world to do so. Because none is exempt, none has the choice to remain any longer than the period that Allāh has fixed. When Allāh sends the angels of death to extract the souls of people, those around them are helpless to save them. Allāh therefore makes it clear that just as people are helpless in this world, they will also be helpless in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* when Allāh will restore people's souls to their bodies so that they may render an account for their deeds.

Despite the fact that all these events are a certainty, some people still reject them without any substantiation. If man had the power to prevent death, he would then certainly have the power to prevent restoration of life on the Day of Judgement. Only then will they be justified in claiming that man will not be resurrected and will not be tried for his deeds. However, in this very world, man can see for himself that he is totally helpless against death. Therefore, it is certain that he is also helpless to prevent resurrection and has no grounds to say that Judgement day shall not take place. Hence, his word is nothing against Allāh's clearly revealed verses of the Qur'ān.

Concerning the deceased person Allāh says, *"Therefore, if he was from among*

those brought close, he shall have comfort, sustenance and the garden of bliss. If he was from among the people of right (he will be told), 'Peace be on you. You are from the people of the right."

On the other hand, *"if he was among the rejecters and deviated ones, he will be served boiling water and shall enter the blazing fire."*

None can deny any of the above because *"This is most definitely the irrefutable truth."*

(96) So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord.

Allāh concludes the Surah with this verse which is identical to verse 74 of this Surah. After mentioning the various bounties that He has bestowed on man and after sounding stern warnings to the Disbelievers, Allāh instructs, *"So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord."* Allāh is free from all defects and Most Glorious. Therefore, whatever He informs man is the absolute truth. It is necessary for man to express His glory and to be convinced about it. It is best that Allāh be glorified (through Tasbīh) and praised during certain special hours.

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه narrates that when the verse *"Fa Sabbih Bismi Rabbikal Azīm"* ("So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord") was revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed his companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم to recite it in the Ruku. It is for this reason that we recite *"Subhāna Rabbiyal Azīm"* during Ruku. He states that when the verse *"Sabhi Hisma Rabbikal A'lā"* was revealed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them to recite it in the Sajdah (*prostartion*). Hence, we recite *"Subhāna Rabbiyal A'lā* during Sajdah (*prostration*)".

NOTE : Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who recites Surah Wāqi 'ah every night shall never suffer from poverty.

Therefore, Sayyidina Abdullah bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه used to instruct his daughters to recite Surah Wā'qiah every night. [*Shu'abul Belief v. 2 p. 492*]

When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه was on his deathbed, Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه asked him, *"What do you desire?" "Allāh's mercy,"* came the reply. When Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه asked him whether he needed a doctor, he replied, *"The doctor made me ill (i.e. Allāh, Who is the real healer, has given me this illness)." When Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه asked whether he should send an allowance for him, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه replied that he had no need for an allowance. Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه insisted that he accept it because he was leaving his family behind. To this, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه replied, "I have taught them something which if they continue reciting, they will never be in need. I have heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say that the person who recites Surah Wāqi 'ah every night will never suffer from poverty."*

"Kanzul Ummāl" (*v. 1 p. 592*) reports, *"Teach Surah Wā'qiah to your women because it is a Surah of wealth."*

سورة الحديد

Madinan	Surah Al-Hadīd	Verses 29

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿1﴾ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
يُحْيِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿2﴾ هُوَ ٱلْأَوَّلُ وَٱلْءَاخِرُ وَٱلظَّٰهِرُ وَٱلْبَاطِنُ ۖ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿3﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى
ٱلْعَرْشِ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنزِلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا ۖ وَهُوَ
مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿4﴾ لَّهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ
تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿5﴾ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِي ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِي ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ
﴿6﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) Everything in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (2) To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, He gives life and death and has power over all things. (3) He is the First, the Last, the Apparent, the Hidden and He has knowledge of everything. (4) It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then focussed on the throne. He knows what enters the earth, what emerges from it, what descends from the sky and what lifts into it. He is with you wherever you are and Allāh sees whatever you do. (5) To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all matters return to Allāh. (6) He enters the night into the day and the day into the night. He has knowledge of the secrets of the heart.

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH BELONGS TO ALLĀH WHO HAS KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING

These opening verses of Surah Hadīd describe some of Allāh's qualities. Allāh begins by saying, *"Everything in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh. He is the Mighty, the Wise. To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, He gives life and death and has power over all things."* The verse continues to say that Allāh

"is the First" i.e. He was in existence before creation. He is also *"the Last"*, meaning that He will be there after creation has perished. Therefore, there never was and never will be a time when Allāh is not there. In addition to this, Allāh is also *"the Apparent"* in that He can be recognised by the numerous signs in creation. At the same time, Allāh is also *"the Hidden"* because He cannot be seen in this world. Nothing is hidden from Him though because *"He has knowledge of everything."*

"It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then focussed on the throne. He knows what enters the earth, what emerges from it, what descends from the sky and what lifts into it. He is with you wherever you are and Allāh sees whatever you do." These verses describe the complete knowledge of Allāh, emphasising the fact that nothing can be hidden from Him.

"To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all matters return to Allāh." The deeds of all will be presented before Allāh on the Day of Judgement so that the decisions for reward and punishment can be made.

"He enters the night into the day and the day into the night." Allāh causes the alternating of day and night, with one being longer than the other during the various seasons. Allāh also *"has knowledge of the secrets of the heart."* Allāh knows whatever people think and is aware of the disbelief or Belief that a person's heart conceals.

ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَأَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا جَعَلَكُم مُّسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ ۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ
وَأَنفَقُوا۟ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿7﴾ وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ ۙ وَٱلرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِرَبِّكُمْ
وَقَدْ أَخَذَ مِيثَٰقَكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿8﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُنَزِّلُ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ
لِّيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿9﴾ وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا
تُنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَٰثُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوِى مِنكُم مَّنْ أَنفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ
ٱلْفَتْحِ وَقَٰتَلَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدُ وَقَٰتَلُوا۟ ۚ وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿10﴾ مَّن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يُقْرِضُ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَٰعِفَهُۥ لَهُۥ
وَلَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿11﴾

(7) Believe in Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and spend from the wealth of which Allāh has made you inheritors. There shall be a great reward for those of you who believe and spend. (8) Why is it that you do not believe in Allāh when the messenger is calling you to believe in your Lord and when Allāh has taken a pledge from you? (That is) if you want to believe. (9) It is He Who revealed clear verses to His slave to remove you from darkness (and bring you) into light. Indeed Allāh is Most Compassionate and Most Merciful towards you. (10) Why is it that you do not spend in Allāh's way when the heritage of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him?. None of you can equal those who spent

and fought (in battle) before the conquest (of Makkah). These people are greater in status than those who spent and fought after (the conquest of Makkah). However, Allāh has promised good for all and Allāh is Informed of what you do. (11) Who is it that will lend to Allāh a beautiful loan so that Allāh may multiply it for him and so that he may have a bounteous reward?

BELIEVE IN ALLĀH AND HIS HOLY PROPHET صلى الله علية وسلم AND SPEND FROM WHAT HE HAS GIVEN YOU

In the first of the above five verses, Allāh instructs, *"Believe in Allāh and His Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and spend from the Wealth of Which Allāh has made you inheritors."* Allāh reminds man that the wealth he now has once belonged to others and that Allāh had granted it to him. He should therefore spend it in a manner that pleases Allāh so that it may profit him before it is given to another person. Whatever one spends in Allāh's way as a believer shall never be wasted because *"There shall be a great reward for those of you who believe and spend."*

Allāh asks, *"Why is it that you do not believe in Allāh when the messenger is calling you to believe in your Lord?"* Allāh did not leave man on his own but sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to call people towards Oneness of Allāh. However, many still refuse to believe. In addition to this, *"Allāh has (also) taken a pledge from you?"* This pledge refers to the pledge of *"Alist"*, which was discussed in the commentary of verses 172 to 174 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah* 7). When this pledge was taken, every soul attested to the fact that Allāh is their Lord.

"(That is) if *you want to believe."* If people really want to believe, they have no excuses to offer because the proofs have been made clear, the signs are manifest and there are answers for all their doubts.

Thereafter, Allāh mentions his sending Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān to mankind. Allāh says, *"it is He (Allāh) Who revealed clear verses (of the Qur'ān) to His slave [The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*] to remove you from darkness [of disbelief and polytheism (shirk)] (and bring you) into the light (of Belief and Islām). Indeed Allāh is Most Compassionate and Most Merciful towards you."* Allāh's compassion towards man is evident from the many favours that He bestows to man.

Allāh again encourages people to spend in His cause by saying, *"Why is it that you do not spend in Allāh 's way when the heritage of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him?"* Whatever man spends really belongs to Allāh. Allāh is the real Owner and Master of all wealth while man is only a temporary trustee of this wealth. Man will have to leave everything behind when he dies, after which it will be the property of another person just as it came to him earlier. Eventually, all shall perish to leave everything for Allāh.

THOSE WHO SPENT BEFORE THE CONQUEST OF MAKKAH

There were many Muslims who spent their wealth for Islām before the conquest of Makkah and fought for Islām during this period. After the conquest of Makkah, Islām grew strong and there was no longer a fear that Islām will be vanquished. Allāh says, *"None of you can equal those who spent and fought (in battle) before the conquest (of Makkah). These people are greater in status than those who spent*

and fought after (the conquest of Makkah). However, Allāh has promised good (forgiveness and Heaven) for all and Allāh is Informed of what you do." Allāh has knowledge of every good deed that a person does and shall reward every person even though the person may carry out the deed well after the conquest of Makkah.

The sentence *"Allāh has promised good for all"* tells us that Allāh Ta 'aala has promised Heaven to all the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم . Allāh also mentions in Surah Tauba, *"The first to lead the way, from the Immigrants, the Ansār, and those who followed them with sincerity; Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them such gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever. This is the ultimate success." [Surah 9, verse 100]*

Allāh has promised Heaven to the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم and has declared that He is pleased with them all. However, calling themselves Muslims, the Rawāfidh falsify this promise of Allāh by claiming that all the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم save a few were disbelievers. Among the *'first to lead the way"* were Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه, both of whom the Rawāfidh hate.

WHO WILL GIVE A LOAN TO ALLĀH?

Allāh asks, *"Who is it that will lend to Allāh a beautiful loan so that Allāh may multiply it for him and so that he may have a bounteous reward?"* Allāh is the Creator and Master of man as well as the Creator and Master of the wealth that man possesses. When man spends his wealth for Allāh's pleasure, Allāh refers to it as a *"beautiful loan"* and will greatly multiply the reward for this. Allāh has no need for man's wealth and man does only himself a favour by spending in worthy courses. The wealth Allāh asks man to spend belongs to Allāh and the direct benefit of the spent wealth accrues to other men like himself. Despite this, Allāh multiplies the spender's rewards a minimum of seven hundred times and even more if He pleases. Giving a *"beautiful loan"* entails (among other factors) spending Hālāl wealth and spending it happily.

Muslim (*v. 2 p. 258*) reports a hadith in which it is stated that when the last third of the night remains, Allāh proclaims. *"Who shall supplicate to Me so that I accept his supplication? Who shall ask of Me so that I may grant his request? Who shall beg Me for forgiveness so that I may forgive him? Who shall give a loan to One Who has everything and Who does not oppress?"* This announcement continues until dawn. Allah says that the loan should be given to *"One Who has everything"* so that no person thinks that Allāh is in need of his wealth. It is only the spender who stands to gain. Nothing spent in Allāh's way is wasted because the reward will certainly accrue in the Hereafter.

يَوْمَ تَرَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ يَسْعَىٰ نُورُهُم بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَٰنِهِم بُشْرَىٰكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿12﴾ يَوْمَ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتُ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱنظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِن نُّورِكُمْ قِيلَ ٱرْجِعُوا۟ وَرَآءَكُمْ فَٱلْتَمِسُوا۟ نُورًا فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُم بِسُورٍ

لَهُۥ بَابٌۢ بَاطِنُهُۥ فِيهِ ٱلرَّحْمَةُ وَظَٰهِرُهُۥ مِن قِبَلِهِ ٱلْعَذَابُ ﴿١٣﴾ يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ
وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَٱرْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ ٱلْأَمَانِىُّ حَتَّىٰ جَآءَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُم
بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿١٤﴾ فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلَا مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مَأْوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ هِىَ
مَوْلَىٰكُمْ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

(12) On the day (of Judgement), you will see the light of believing men and believing women run ahead of them and on their right-hand sides. "Today you are given the glad tidings of gardens beneath which rivers flow, where you shall live forever." That is the supreme success. (13) On that day the hypocrite men and hypocrite women shall say to the believers, "Wait for us so that we may have some of your light." It will be said, "Return from where you came and seek light there!" Then a wall with a door will be placed between them. Allāh's mercy will be on the inside while there will be punishment on the outside. (14) They (the hypocrites) will call out to them (the believers), "Were we not with you?" They will reply, "Certainly, but you trapped yourselves in deviation, you laid in wait, you doubted and hopes deceived you until Allāh's command arrived. And the deceiver deceived you about Allāh." (15) "Today ransom shall neither be accepted from you nor from the disbelievers. Your abode shall be the Fire and it is the worst of places to return to."

THE BELIEVERS SHALL HAVE LIGHT ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT WHILE THE HYPOCRITES WILL REMAIN IN DARKNESS

These verses speak about the condition of the believers (*Mu'minīn*), *(Mu'mināt)* (female believers), Hypocrites (*Munafiqin*) and female Hypocrites (*female Munafiqāt*) on the Day of Judgment. Addressing the reader, Allāh says, *"On the day (of Judgement), you will see the light of believing men and believing women run ahead of them and on their right hand sides.* (They will be told) *"Today you are given the glad tidings of gardens beneath which rivers flow, where you shall live forever.' That is the supreme success."*

On the Day of Judgement, every type of person will be present, the believer, the disbeliever, the hypocrite and the polytheist. The disbelievers and Polytheists will be in total darkness while the believers will be given a light by which they will be able to cross the bridge of Sirāt. The intensity of light every believer will receive will depend on the amount of good deeds he carried out. As the believers will proceed ,ahead with the aid of their lights, the hypocrites will follow them. However, the hypocrites will fall far behind until they are left in total darkness. They will then plead to the believers saying, *"Wait for us so that we may have some of your light."*

However, *"It will be said (to them), 'Return from where you came and seek light there!' Then a wall with a door will be placed between them. Allāh's mercy will be on the inside while there will be punishment on the outside."* With this barrier in place, the hypocrites will be separated from the believers and will be unable to reach them.

They will therefore be left in darkness.

"They (the hypocrites) will call out to them (the believers), 'Were we not with you?"' The hypocrites live among the believers, perform Salāh with them and even participate in Jihād expeditions with the believers. They will therefore question the believers for leaving them in darkness. The Believers will reply saying, *"Certainly, but you trapped yourselves in deviation, you laid in wait (for a calamity to befall the Muslims), you doubted (the truth of Islām) and hopes deceived you until Allāh's command arrived."* Then hypocrites anticipated that Islām will be short-lived and will not make any progress. Although they pretended to be Muslims, they actually bore enmity towards the Muslims. It is for this reason that they never became sincere Muslims and always hoped the worst for Islām and the Muslims. In this manner they led their lives *"until Allāh 's command arrived"* i.e. until death overtook them. When death overtakes a person, it is too late to make Taubah (*repentance*). In addition to this, *"the deceiver deceived you about Allāh."* The *"deceiver"* refers to Satan, who leads such people astray until they are unable to tell truth from falsehood.

It will then be said to the hypocrites, *"Today ransom shall neither be accepted from you nor from the disbelievers. Your abode shall be the Fire and it is the worst of places to return to."* The hypocrites shall also suffer eternal damnation like the disbelievers. [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

Although the verse mentions that the light of the believers shall be *"ahead of them and on their right-hand sides"*, it does not mean that they will not have light on their left-hand sides. The following hadith mentions the light on their left-hand sides. A person once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"There must have been a great many Ummahs between your Ummah and the Ummah of Sayyidina Nūh* عليه السلام*. How will you be able to recognise your Ummah on the Day of Judgement?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied. *"Because of making wudhu (ablution), the faces, hands and feet of my Ummah shall be shining bright. No other Ummah shall have this feature. I shall also recognise them by the mark of prostration on their foreheads. Another feature of theirs shall be that there shall be light ahead of them as well as on their right- and left-hand sides."* [*Hākim v. 2 p. 478*]

"Allāh's mercy will be on the inside while there will be punishment on the outside." While some commentators are of the opinion that this wall refers to the *"A'rāf*, which will separate the believers from the disbelievers (and hypocrites), others maintain that it refers to another wall. The author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* writes that it is the wall between Heaven and Hell. Nothing conclusive can be said about the reason for the door in the wall or about how long it will remain. It is possible that the door could be there to facilitate communication between the people of Heaven and the people of Hell. Reference is made to this communication in Surah Saffāt where Allāh says that a person in Heaven will be asked, *"Do you want to have a look at him (your disbeliever friend)?' When he looks, he will see him in the midst of Hell. He will say, 'By Allah! You almost destroyed me. If it were not for the bounty of my Lord, I would have certainly been from those brought forward (for punishment). "'* [*Surah, verses 54-57*]

It is also possible that the door refers to the door of Heaven through which the believers shall enter after separating from the hypocrites. It will remain open

only until they all enter. Thereafter it will be sealed forever. Allāh knows best.

NOTE : Concerning the light of the believers on the Day of Judgement, Allāh says in Surah Tahrīm, *"On that day Allāh shall not disgrace the Holy Prophet and the believers with him. Their light shall travel ahead of them and on their right hand sides. They will say, 'O our Lord! Perpetuate our light for us and forgive us. Verily You have power over everything."[Surah 66, verse 8]*

Although all good deeds are a source of light in the Hereafter, the Ahadīth have mentioned certain deeds that are a special source of light. Sayyidina Burayda رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Give the glad tidings of perfect light on the Day of Judgement to those who proceed to the Masājid in the darkness." [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "For the person who performs Salāh regularly, Salāh shall be a light for him on the Day of Judgement, a proof (to his Belief) and a means of salvation for him. As for the person who does not perform Salāh regularly, it will neither be a light nor a proof nor a means of salvation. Such a person will be raised on the Day of Judgement with the likes of Qārūn, phara'oh *(Fir'oun)*, his minister Hāmān and Ubay bin Khalaf ."[*Ahmad v. 2 p. 169*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه quotes from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who recites Surah Kahf on a Friday shall have light between that Friday and the next. [*Bayhaqi v. 3 p. 249*]

Sayyidina Amr bin Shu'ayb رضى الله عنه reports from his great grandfather that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not remove a white hair because it is a light of a Muslim. When a person grows a white hair as a Muslim, a good deed is recorded in lieu of it, a sin is forgiven for it and he is elevated a rank (in Heaven) because of it." [*"Mishkāt" p. 382 from Abu Dawūd*]

أَلَمۡ يَأۡنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَن تَخۡشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمۡ لِذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا
يَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبۡلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡأَمَدُ فَقَسَتۡ قُلُوبُهُمۡۖ وَكَثِيرٞ مِّنۡهُمۡ
فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿16﴾ ٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحۡيِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَاۚ قَدۡ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ
لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَعۡقِلُونَ ﴿17﴾

(16) Has the time not arrived for the hearts of the believers to submit to Allāh's remembrance and the truth that has been revealed? Do not become like those who were given the Book before, after which a long period of time elapsed and their hearts hardened? A large number of them were sinners. (17) Know that Allāh revives the earth after its death. We have expounded the signs for you so that you may understand.

HAS THE TIME NOT ARRIVED FOR THE HEARTS OF THE BELIEVERS TO SUBMIT?

The above verse addresses those Muslims who are lacking in good deeds and whose hearts have not yet focussed on Allāh's Dhikr and the Qur'ān as it should have. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once entered the Masjid where he found some companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم laughing. As the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم moved his shawl from his face, it was noticed that his face was reddening. He said, *"Are you laughing when your Lord has not yet revealed a surety that you are forgiven? (You should therefore not waste your time laughing and jesting). Concerning your laughter Allāh has revealed the verse: 'Has the time not arrived for ,the hearts of the believers to submit to Allāh 's remembrance and the truth that has been revealed...".*

The prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! What is the expiation for our laughter?" In reply, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Cry as much as you have laughed."

This verse was once recited in the presence of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه while some people from Yamama were with him. When they began to weep, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said to them, *"We also used to cry like this. Thereafter, such people came whose hearts were hard."* [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 27 p. 179, 180*]

This verse makes it clear that the people of Belief should devote themselves to Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, recitation of the Qur'ān and understanding the Qur'ān. Belief will be strengthened when the heart submits to Allah's remembrance *(Dhikr)* and to the Qur'ān. When this submission is missing, the heart begins to harden. As the heart hardens, a person becomes more inclined towards the world and loses concern for the Ākhirah. The person will then complete two Rakāhs Salāh in less than a minute, all the while thinking about his worldly activities instead of concentrating on his Salāh.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Apart from Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, do not speak excessively because talks apart from Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* cause the heart to harden. The heart that is hard is furthest from Allāh." [*Tirmidhi*]

A FASCINATING INCIDENT

Sayyidina Fudhayl bin Ayādh رحمة الله عليه was a famous Muhaddith (*Scholar of hadith*) and is regarded as one of the greatest saints. Before becoming pious, he was a robber. During this period it transpired that he fell in love with a certain woman. As he was scaling a wall to meet her, he heard someone reciting the verse: *"Has the time not arrived for the hearts of the believers to submit to Allāh's remembrance and the truth that has been revealed?"* As soon as he heard this verse, he exclaimed, *"Certainly O my Lord. The time has certainly arrived."* Saying this, he turned and headed towards a deserted house. There he found a few travellers consulting. When one suggested that they leave on their way, the other proposed that they wait for the morning because Fudhayl was in the area and would rob them.

When Fudhayl overheard this conversation, he thought, "I have been

spending my entire nights in sin and the Muslims are now terrified of me. It seems as if Allāh Ta'āla has sent me here this night so that I forsake sinning." He then made the following Supplication to Allāh Ta'āla, "O Allāh! I beseech Your forgiveness and my repentance is that I shall spend my life at Your sacred home (in Makkah)."

He then left for Makkah where he spent his entire life in Ibadāh. Whenever tears came to his eyes, he would weep so much that the people around him would take pity on him. Allāma Ibn Hibbān رحمة الله عليه writes about Sayyidina Fudhayl رحمة الله عليه: "He took up residence in Makkah Mukarramah with great sacrifice. He was always abstinent and feared Allāh greatly. He would cry a lot, spend much of his time in solitude and avoid people. Until he passed away He kept no material possessions."

Sayyidina Fudhayl bin Ayādh رحمة الله عليه once saw some people joking and laughing while learning Ahadīth. He called them and said, *"O heirs of the Anbiya (The Holy Prophets* عليهم السلام*! Enough! Enough! Enough! You are leaders who will be followed."*

On one occasion when he noticed someone laughing he said, 'I shall tell you something good." He then recited the verse: *"Do not be boastful, for verily Allāh does not like the boastful."*

DO NOT BE LIKE THE AHLUL KITĀB (*PEOPLE OF BOOK*)

Addressing the believers further, Allāh says, *"Do not become like those who were given the Book before (i.e. the Jews and Christians), after which a long period of time elapsed and their hearts hardened?"* As time passed, the Jews and Christians grew negligent of the teachings of their scriptures and fell deeper into sin. Eventually when they failed to repent to Allāh, their hearts hardened. When this happened, they were unable to differentiate between good and evil and saw no need to preserve their religions. As a result, many of them resorted to disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*. Referring to this condition, Allah says, *"A large number of them were sinners."*

It is therefore necessary for believers to make their hearts submit, to engage in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, to recite the. Qur'ān and to practise the injunctions of the Qur'ān. May Allāh protect us from becoming like the Jews and Christians. Āmīn.

Allāh then says. *"Know that Allāh revives the earth after its death.* "Just as Allāh revives dead ground when He sends the rains, He can soften hard hearts when people engage in remembrance *(Dhikr)* and recitation of the Qur'ān. *"We have expounded the signs for you so that you may understand."*

إِنَّ ٱلْمُصَّدِّقِينَ وَٱلْمُصَّدِّقَٰتِ وَأَقْرَضُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضَٰعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ
كَرِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصِّدِّيقُونَ ۖ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءُ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٩﴾

(18) Verily Allāh shall multiply (the rewards of) those men who give charity, those women who give charity and those who give Allāh a beautiful loan. Theirs shall be a bounteous reward. (19) Those who believe in Allāh and His messengers are extremely true. The martyrs shall be near their Lord where they shall have their reward and light. Those who disbelieve and deny Our signs will be the dwellers of the Blaze.

THE REWARDS OF THOSE WHO SPEND IN CHARITY

Concerning those people who spend sincerely in charity, Allāh says, *"Verily Allāh shall multiply (the rewards of) those men who give charity, those women who give charity and those who give Allāh a beautiful loan. Theirs shall be a bounteous reward."* This discussion has been given in the commentary of verse 12 of this Surah.

WHO ARE THE "SIDDIQĪN?

Allāh says, *"Those who believe in Allāh and His messengers are extremely true (the Siddiqīn)."* Real Belief means that one's belief in Allāh should be absolutely true and without a trace of doubt. Belief also demands that a person be true in word and deed. Although truthfulness generally refers to truthfulness in speech, the Arabic word *"Sidq"* (truthfulness) refers to truth in speech and in action. Similarly, lying can also be in word and deed.

Sayyidina Asmā bint Abi Bakr رضی اللہ عنہا narrates that a woman once told the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that she was a co-wife, and asked whether she could tell her husband's other wife that her husband had given her certain things. which he did not (merely to make her jealous). The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, *"The person who falsely claims that he/she was given something is like a person who dons clothing of lies."* This means that the person is covered in lies from head to toe. This hadith refers to lying in word and in deed.

Allāh says further, *"The martyrs shall be near their Lord where they shall have their reward and light."* According to this translation, the sentence concerning the Shuhadā (martyrs) is not linked to the sentence concerning the Siddiqīn. However, the sentence can also be regarded as part of the preceding sentence. If regarded as part of the preceding sentence, it would mean that both the Siddiqīn and the Shuhadā (*martyrs*) shall be near their Lord and will enjoy their rewards and light. The Arabic context of the phrase *"shall be near their Lord"* means that it is by Allāh's command that they are as they are, or that their condition is within His knowledge. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 298*]

According to the general intent of the verse (i.e. if all the phrases were to be linked), every person who believes in Allāh and His Anbiya (The Holy Prophets علیهم السلام) shall be regarded as Siddiqīn and Shuhadā. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ once said to the people sitting with him, *"You are all Siddiqīn (Righteous) and Shuhadā (martyrs)."* When someone exclaimed, *"What are you saying?"* Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ recited the above verse without separating the phrases, which is translated as: *"Those who believe in Allāh and His messengers are extremely true and martyrs by their Lord (i.e. in the sight of their Lord)."*

After reporting this, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* writes that it is

appropriate to say that *"those who believe in Allāh and His messengers"* refers to people with perfect belief and who carry out actions that behove people with perfect Belief. The person who is a believer but who engages in acts of carnal passion and is negligent of the commands of the Shari'ah can scarcely be regarded as a Shahīd (martyr) and a Siddīq (*true believer*).

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Whoever obeys Allāh and His messenger,, then they will be with those the Holy Prophets, "Siddiqīn", martyrs and "Sālihīn" upon whom Allāh has bestowed His bounties. These are indeed the best of companions."* It is apparent from this verse that the Anbiya (The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام), the Siddiqīn (*true believers*) and the Shuhadā (*martyrs*) hold a very high status. Other believers will be able to share their company who make good companions for them. Combining the two verses conveys the idea that although the average believer belongs to the category of the Siddiqīn (*true believers*) and Shuhadā (*martyrs*), there will be group from among them who will attain greatly elevated ranks on account of their excellent Belief and good deeds. Others will be granted the honour of sharing their company despite the vast difference in status. Those that will enjoy the elevated ranks receive the title of *"Siddīq"* because of their true belief, such as Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. He accepted the message of Islām as soon as he heard it and remained steadfast until his last breath. He sacrificed his health and wealth for Islām and on one occasion gave everything he possessed in Allāh's path.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once climbing Mount Uhud with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, and Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه when the mountain began shaking. Striking his foot on the mountain, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Be still! There is a Prophet, a Siddīq and two martyrs on you."* [*Bukhari*]

In this hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم foretold that both Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه would be martyrs. The Ahadīth mention certain deeds that one may carry out to be included in the ranks of the Prophets عليهم السلام, the Siddiqīn (*true believers*) and the Shuhadā (*martyrs*). Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The truthful and trustworthy trader will be with Prophets and the Siddiqīn."* [*Tirmidhi*]

In Surah Maryam (Surah 19), Allāh refers to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام as a Siddīq (verse 41) as well a Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام (*verse 56).* Verse 75 of Surah Mā'idah also gives Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام the title of Siddīq. Therefore, the class of the Siddiqīn is divided into several categories. Belonging to these categories are both the Prophet's عليهم السلام as well as their followers. Of course, the status of these groups vary. The Siddiqīn (*true believers*) and the Shuhadā (*martyrs*) referred to in verse 69 of Surah Nisā belong to the highest category of Siddiqīn (*true believers*) and Shuhadā (*martyrs*).

WHO ARE THE SHUHADĀ (*MARTYRS*)?

While some commentators state that the Shuhadā (martyrs) are those who die fighting in Jihād, other commentators are of the opinion that the word Shuhadā means *"Shāhidīn"* i.e. witnesses. The witnesses are those who will testify

on the Day of Judgement, such as the Prophets عليهم السلام who will testify against their respective nations. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah will testify that the previous Prophets عليهم السلام truly preached to their Ummahs and, when the Ummahs will question the veracity of the Holy Prophet 's صلى الله عليه وسلم Ummah, he will testify to this. The details of this have passed in Surah Baqarah [*Surah 2, verse 143*], Surah Nisā [*Surah 4, verse 41*] and Surah Hajj [*Surah 22, verse 78*].

Besides the Prophets عليهم السلام, there are many others who will be given the honour of being witnesses on the Day of Judgement. One should aspire to attain this noble position and make an effort to stay away from all deeds that are unbecoming of the status of a witness. Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that people who curse often will be deprived of being witnesses and intercessors on the Day of Judgement. [*Muslim v. 2 p. 322*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "It is inappropriate for a Siddīq to curse." [*Ibid*]

A Siddīq should guard his tongue and take care not to curse any person or any animal. It is unfortunate that many teachers are in the habit of cursing the children they teach.

Allāh terminates the verse by mentioning the opposite of these pious people when He says, *"Those who disbelieve and deny our signs will be the dwellers of the Blaze."*

ٱعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَٰدِ ۖ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ ٱلْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَٰمًا ۖ وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ ۚ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾ سَابِقُوٓا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢١﴾

(20) Know that the life of this world is merely play, futility, decoration, boasting among each other and rivalry in wealth and children. The example of this is like rain which feeds the plants that amaze farmers. Thereafter it dries and you will see it become yellow, only to be reduced to bits. In the Hereafter there shall be severe punishment, forgiveness and (Allāh's) pleasure. The life of this world is but a commodity of deception. (21) Race towards the forgiveness of your Lord and a Heaven, the width of which is like that of the sky and the earth. It has been prepared for those who believe in Allāh and His messengers. That is the grace of Allāh which He gives to whoever He desires. Allāh is the Possessor of immense grace.

THE WORLD IS A PLACE OF DECEPTION

Allāh describes the life of this world in the above verse. Allāh says, *"Know that the life of this world is merely play, futility, decoration...* "Everything in this world appears to be very beautiful and attractive. Those who have a great deal of wealth will be *"boasting among each other and (engaging in) rivalry in wealth and children.* When people begin to do this, they quickly forget Allāh Who has granted all their wealth to them. Allāh says in Surah Takāthur, *"Rivalry in amassing wealth shall destroy you until you reach the graves."* [*Surah 102, verses 1, 2*]

Allāh Ta'āla goes on to describe the transitory nature of this world when He says, *"The example of this (world) is like rain which feed the plants that amaze farmers. Thereafter it dries and you will see it become yellow, only to be reduced to bits."* When rain falls, plants and vegetation begin to flourish. Plantations begin to grow very well and farmers are extremely happy with the growth. However, as time takes its toll on the fields, they start drying up and becoming yellow. Not long afterwards, they are reduced to nothing, a far cry from what they were.

It is the same with this world. While everything appears to be beautiful and enticing, people forget the end result. They then engage in all types of illicit activities to earn wealth. This leads them to steal, rob, swindle and bribe people just to make money. Many of those who earn their money in a Hālāl manner also fall prey to the love of wealth when they begin to neglect their Fardh (obligatory) and Wajib *(Compulsory)* duties while earning. There are very few people who are conscious of Halāl (*lawful*) and Harām *(unlawful)* when it concerns earning and who avoid sinning in the process. It is tragic that many people make their livelihood a curse for themselves, flouting the Shari'ah and subjecting themselves to the punishment of the Hereafter. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"In the Hereafter there shall be severe punishment."* On the contrary, the Hereafter shall hold *'forgiveness and (Allāh's) pleasure"* for those who abstain from Unlawful earnings and who spend their wealth in the right courses. Instead of their wealth being a cause for *"severe punishment"* in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, their wealth shall be a cause of "forgiveness and (Allāh's) pleasure."

Allāh ends the verse by saying, *"The life of this world is but a commodity of deception."* In this world, neither are the lives of people nor everything else eternal. The person who places his reliance in this world shall become negligent of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, where he will suffer for this negligence. A truly intelligent person is he who does not attach his heart to this world and who focuses his attention on the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

THE COMMAND TO RACE TO ALLĀH'S FORGIVENESS AND HEAVEN

Once it has become evident that this world and everything it contains is of a fleeting nature, sound intelligence demands that people should rather compete with each other in the race towards Allāh's forgiveness and the permanent abode of the Hereafter. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Race towards the forgiveness of your Lord and a Heaven, the width of which is like that of the sky and the earth.*

Competing with each other in the race towards Heaven is an act of extreme virtue because, unlike any other race, every participant gains tremendously.

Allāh shall reward every person for his/her effort and none will have to concede the rewards of their deeds to another. No person's reward will be deducted from that of another. Of course, the rewards will be earned in full when the deeds are carried out sincerely and without hurting others.

This verse encourages the believers to compete with each other in carrying out good deeds, much like verse 133 of Surah Āl Imrān where Allāh says, *"Hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and that Heaven which has the expanse of the heavens and the earth and has been prepared for the pious."* Both these verses encourage people not to delay in carrying out good deeds because one has no guarantee of life. No good deed should be postponed for another day because the opportunity may never present itself again.

The verse of Surah Hadīd states, *"a Heaven, the width of which is like that of the sky and the earth"* and the verse of Surah Āl Imrān states, *"that Heaven which has the expanse of the heavens and the earth."* In both cases, the size of the sky and the earth has been used to describe the size of Heaven because the earth and the sky are the largest phenomena known to man. In reality, Heaven is much larger than the earth and sky. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed there are a hundred stages in Heaven. A single stage of these is sufficient to contain the entire universe." [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the Heaven that the person of the lowest level of Heaven shall have is ten times larger than this world. [*"Mishkāt" p. 492 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Allāh says that Heaven *"has been prepared for those who believe in Allāh and His messengers."* This verse makes it clear that people who do not believe in Allāh and who falsify the Prophets عليهم السلام will not be able to enter Heaven. A person who believes in Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who appeared in his time shall be worthy of Heaven irrespective of the time in which he lived.

Allāh says further, *"That is the grace of Allāh which He gives to whoever He desires. Allāh is the Possessor of immense grace.* "Every person will enter Heaven solely because of Allāh's grace. Therefore, none has the right to boast about his deeds because these cannot qualify him to enter Heaven. It is Allāh who guides people to Belief and accepting these deeds are His prerogative.

مَآ أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿22﴾ لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿23﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبُخْلِ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿24﴾

(22) Every calamity that afflicts you on earth and in yourselves is recorded in the Book before We even create it. This is certainly easy for Allāh. (23) So that you do not grieve about what you lose and you do not boast about what you receive. Allāh dislikes every haughty braggart... (24) ... who is miserly and who instruct

others to be miserly. And whoever turns away, then (he should know that) Allāh is certainly Independent, Most Worthy of praise.

EVERY CALAMITY HAS BEEN RECORDED LONG BEFORE IT OCCURS

Man has not come to earth merely to waste his life. Man's life on earth is a test. Allāh says in Surah Mulk , *"He (Allāh) has created life and death to test who of you will carry out the best deeds."* Since man has been sent to earth as a test, he has to expect conditions that are trying. The following are the two categories of aspects that test man:

A. Wealth, comfort and other bounties.

B. Calamities, problems and other difficulties.

Many people forget Allāh Ta'āla when they are tested with the first category of trials. They tend to neglect good deeds and become preoccupied with their indulgence in the comforts of the world. The previous verses cautioned people that *"the life of this world is merely play, futility, decoration, boasting among each other and rivalry in wealth and children."* Allāh told people that this world is transitory and is just like a crop that flourishes for a while, dries up and then becomes something that one would not realise even existed before. By this example, Allāh impresses on man that the world is not something to be desired.

In the foregoing verses, Allāh speaks about the second category of trials i.e. hardships and difficulties. Allāh says that every calamity that afflicts people shall definitely take place because it is recorded in the "protected tablet *(Lowhul Mahfūdh)*". The calamities that affect man may either be *"on earth"* such as droughts, floods, earthquakes, destruction of crops by locusts or hail, etc. Besides these types of calamities, difficulties may also affect people on a personal level such as illness, paralysis, handicaps, etc. These are all inevitable. One should never lose sight of the fact that Allāh causes these phenomena to happen and an intelligent servant of Allāh never complains or objects.

NEVER GRIEVE OVER SOMETHING LOST OR BOAST ABOUT SOMETHING GAINED

Allāh says further that He has informed man about the fact that all conditions are from Him *"So that you do not grieve about what you lose and you do not boast about what you receive."* Grieving excessively over a loss distracts one from Allāh's remembrance and causes one to neglect one's efforts for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).* Calamities are inevitable and one is entitled to feel instinctively grieved. However, one should not purposely prolong the grief and should not do such actions that anger Allāh Ta'āla.

Together with not expressing excessive grief over one's losses, Allāh also forbids people from boasting about the bounties that one receives. Whatever one receives is from Allāh and has been preordained. No person can claim that he *"deserved"* what he received.

Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

said, "The condition of a believer is amazing and this condition is exclusive to the believer. When he experiences good fortune, he is grateful and this is best for him. On the other hand, If he experiences ill fortune, he is patient and this is also best for him."

CONDEMNING PRIDE AND MISERLINESS

Allāh says, *"Allāh dislikes every haughty braggart who is miserly and who instruct others to be miserly."* Many people who are blessed with wealth tend to become boastful and proud. They then begin to have a high regard for themselves and think others to be low. Allāh warns such people that He has no love for them. Because such people are prone to have great love for their wealth, they become miserly and even promote their niggardly nature to others. Not only do they withhold their own money but they also prevent others from spending in charity even though they know that the money will not benefit them.

One will notice that when certain generous people instruct their cashiers or treasurers to give money to collectors, these people take the money out but are very reluctant to give the money. It appears as if their hearts are refusing to part with it even though it does not belong to them and the owner has already instructed that it be spent in charity.

"And whoever turns away, then (he should know that) Allāh is certainly Independent, Most Worthy of praise. " Allāh does not require people's wealth. If a person spends in charity, he will receive the reward for it. However, if one chooses to be miserly, it will be to his own detriment.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَٰبَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ ۖ وَأَنزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

(25) Indeed We have sent Our messengers with clear proofs and sent with them the Book and Scale so that people uphold justice. And We have revealed iron that holds great awe and benefits for man. (Allāh has made iron) so that He knows who will assist Him and His messengers without seeing Him. Verily Allāh is Powerful, Mighty.

ALLĀH SENT THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام WITH CLEAR PROOFS AND SCRIPTURES SO THAT JUSTICE IS ESTABLISHED

Allāh says, *"Indeed We have sent Our messengers with clear proofs and sent with them the Book and Scale so that people uphold justice."* Allāh Ta'āla refers to all the divine scriptures when he mentions *"the Book"*. The *"Scale"* refers to justice because it is an instrument used to weigh justly and as such symbolises justice. Allāh has sent the Prophets عليهم السلام, the divine scriptures and the scale *"so that people uphold justice."*

THE USES OF IRON

Allāh states further, *"And We have revealed iron that holds great awe..."*. Iron has always been used to make weapons of war. Swords, spears, bayonets and guns of the past were made from iron, which is still indispensable in the manufacture of modern-day weaponry such as missiles, bombs, etc. People have always stood in awe of these weapons and the armament of a nation has always kept its enemies at bay. Believers use these weapons to fight disbelief and shirk and to establish Islām in the world. The disbelievers have always feared Jihād and shall continue fearing.

Iron also holds great *"benefits for man."* The benefits of iron are not unknown to anyone. There is some iron in almost everything man has to make. Even items made out of wood require iron nails and things that may have no iron in them have to be made with tools or machines that are all made of iron. Iron is required to construct buildings and is also indispensable for farming because of the use of farming equipment such as tractors and age-old iron hoes. Iron is needed as bridles for animals and its versatility cannot be overruled in mining all other minerals that are also indispensable. The benefits of iron are truly innumerable and cannot be discussed in detail here.

Allāh has made iron *"so that He knows who will assist Him and His messengers without seeing Him."* Allāh wishes to see who of His servants will take up weapons to defend His Religion and render assistance to His Prophets عليهم السلام. When there is a need for Jihād, Allāh's sincere slaves will march in His path, knowing that they may be killed. It should be understood that Allāh is aware of everything even before its actual occurrence. Something coming to Allāh's knowledge does not refute this accepted belief since there are two types of knowledge. One is of something before its occurrence (i.e. the knowledge that it will happen), while the other is of the same incident after its occurrence (i.e. the knowledge that it has already happened). This verse refers to the second type i.e. the knowledge that a certain incident had taken place.

"Verily Allāh is Powerful, Mighty." This makes it clear that Allāh is not in need of man's assistance. Allāh is Capable of defending His religion and His Prophets عليهم السلام without the assistance of others. However, a person will benefit himself by making efforts to defend the religion.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ ۖ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿26﴾ ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى
ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً
وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ٱبْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَٰهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ رِضْوَٰنِ ٱللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ
رِعَايَتِهَا ۖ فَـَٔاتَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿27﴾

(26) Verily We have sent Nūh عليه السلام and Ibrahīm عليه السلام as prophets and We

have sustained prophethood and scriptures in their progenies. Among them were those who were rightly guided while most of them were sinners. (27) Thereafter We successively sent Our messengers in their footsteps. We sent Isā عليه السلام the son of Maryam, gave him the Injīl and placed compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. They invented monasticism which We did not ordain for them but they did it in search of Allāh's pleasure. However, they did not observe it as it ought to have been observed. We granted their reward to those of them who believed while many of them were sinners.

THE FOLLOWERS OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام INVENT MONASTICISM AFTER ALLĀH SENT THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام IN SUCCESSION

Allāh says that He sent Prophet عليهم السلام among the progenies of both Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. While there were many people of their progenies who accepted the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام, there were also many who did not accept. Thereafter, Allāh specifically mentions Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام to whom Allāh gave the Injīl. Among those who accepted his message and who gave him support were his disciples, called the Hawariyyin. Concerning these disciples, Allāh says that He *"placed compassion and mercy"* in their hearts.

Allāh states further that the Christians, *"invented monasticism which We did not ordain for them but they did it in search of Allāh's pleasure. However, they did not observe it as it ought to have been observed."* "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said to him, "O Ibn Umm Abd! Do you know from where the Bani Isrā'īl devised monasticism?" Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه replied, "Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم know best." Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "After Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, tyrannical kings reigned who indulged in numerous sins. The believers took strong exception to this and thrice engaged them in battle. However, they lost each time and when they were reduced to only a few men, they said, 'If we continue fighting them, they will kill us all and there will be none left to preach the true religion. We should therefore spread out on earth and wait until Allāh sends the Holy Prophet about whose coming Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام had promised us.' Consequently, they occupied mountains and caves and practised monasticism. While some adhered to the true religion, others became disbelievers." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited the verse: *"They invented monasticism which We did not ordain for them but they did it in search of Allāh's pleasure. However, they did not observe it as it ought to have been observed." [v. 4 p. 301]*

This narration appears without a chain of narrators and without the reference of any source.

One may question that how could these followers of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام engage in Jihād when it was not prescribed in their Shari'ah? It may be said that these people were perhaps attacked and were forced to defend themselves. As outlined in the commentary of verse 111 of Surah Taubah (Surah 9), it is apparent that the followers of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام did receive the command to

wage Jihād. Allāh knows best.

The institution of monasticism was an addition to the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام which unnecessarily burdened the human soul. Allāh did not sanction the practice. Monks were not allowed to marry, were extremely frugal in eating, drinking and dressing and ate only what was necessary to sustain them. They built churches in the mountains where they spent their entire lives. It was one of these monks who informed Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه about the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and described the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to him. It was then that Sayyidina Salmān رضى الله عنه left for Madinah aspiring to meet the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Monks stayed away from people and rulers because these people encouraged them to live like them. They continued to lead lives of abstinence with the hope that living as monks would please Allāh Ta'āla.

However, the time came when the monks also succumbed to the attraction of the world. Whereas they had intended to wait for the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they refused to believe in him when he appeared even though they were certain that he was the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام foretold. Of course, there were many who accepted him, concerning whom Allāh says, *"We granted their reward to those of them who believed."* However, *"many of them were sinners"* who obstinately refused to accept.

Even before the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Christians had already adulterated the teachings of their religion by changing the Injīl and subscribing to the Trinity. In addition to this, they began to hold the belief that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام had died for their sins. It is because of this belief that their priests exercise the liberty to pardon them for their sins every Sunday. The Christians of the earlier centuries were largely Roman Catholic. However, the Protestant sprung up from among them and many of them proved to be great sinners.

THE SORRY STATE OF TODAY'S CHRISTIANS, THEIR GREED AND OPPRESSION

When the Christians stopped following Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, they lost the *"compassion and mercy"* that Allāh had instilled in their forebears. When they refused to accept the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they became archenemies of the Muslims just as the Jews are. Apart from the disbelief they practise, the Christians are leaders in sin and vice. In fact, it is they who teach sin to the rest of the world. Because they entertain the false belief of Atonement, they have become the most morally depraved nation, with nudity, adultery and other sins being the norm for many. The sacred institution of marriage is fast becoming extinct in their countries and they have even legalised homosexuality. Extra-marital affairs and illegitimate children are all too common in their societies.

It is strange to note that the Pope never seems to oppose the immoral legislation that their governments pass. Did Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام ever sanction the promotion of immorality and promiscuity? It is tragic that African and Asian countries ape the ways of Europe and America and find themselves spiralling into the bottomless pit of immorality. Those who profess to be followers of

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام have taken the leader in sin whereas Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام has nothing to do with the religion of Christianity as practised today. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام preached Oneness of Allāh, chaste behaviour and even informed his followers that they should believe in the Holy Prophet to come after him viz. Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. By rejecting the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Christians have directly opposed the clear instruction of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

In addition to this, Christians dutyaries are found throughout the world preaching their religion to others whereas Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام clearly told them in the Bible that they were to preach only to the *"lost sheep of the House of Isrā'īl"*. Matthew 10:5 reads, *"These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Isra'īl."* Matthew *15:24* quotes that Sayyidina Isā said, *"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Isra'īl."*

Despite the various interpolations of the Bible, the Bible still contains many references to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. John 14:25 and 14:26 contain the following extract: *"These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counselor [i.e. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

John 16:7 reads, *"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."*

In John 14:16, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام said to the Jews, *"And I will pray the father, and He will give you another Counselor* [*i.e. The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم], *to be with you for ever."*

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is also quoted as saying in John 16:13 *"When the Spirit of truth* [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."*

After a few lines, information is given regarding the ascension of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام to the heavens when he said to his disciples, *"I am leaving the world and going to the Father."* This extract coincides with verses 157 and *158* of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*) where Allāh says, *"With certainty, they never killed him [Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام] but Allāh raised him towards Himself Allāh is Mighty, the Wise."*

After the above few verses, the Bible speaks about Sayyidina Isā's عليه السلام return to the world in the following words, "I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have (shall) over come the world." [*All the above extracts have been quoted from the "revised standard version of "The Holy Bible" published by the Bible Society of South Africa in 1979*]

Dear Christians! Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام has said that he was sent as a Holy Prophet to the Bani Isrā'īl, so do not contravene his orders by placing duty Aries everywhere. Rather accept Islām. The Qur'ān tells us that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was raised to the heavens and the Ahadīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم make

it clear that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام shall return to this world and pass away naturally. The Bible conveys the same message. It is therefore sensible for Christians to obey Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام by accepting Islām. They should not be obstinate by clinging to the now corrupted religion that they preach. They are only destroying their lives in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* by doing this.

THE UNITED STAND OF THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS AGAINST ISLĀM

Although the Jews and Christians during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recognised him to be Allāh's Holy Prophet, very few accepted Islām. In fact, narrations make it clear that the Jews settled in Madinah specifically to await the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that they could follow him. However, when the time came for them to accept, they reneged. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"When what they recognise comes to them, they deny it. Allāh 's curse is on the disbelievers."* [*Surah Baqara (2), verse 89*]

Among those Jews who accepted Islām was Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه, a former Rabbi *(Jewish Scholar)*. He said, *"When I saw his [The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم] face, I knew that this could not be the face of a liar."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 168*]

Because the Christians also knew about the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, many Christians including the king of Abyssinia accepted Islām during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, the majority refused to accept and refuse even today. Whereas millions of Hindus have accepted Islām in the Indo-Pak sub continent, the Christians refuse to budge. Although many have accepted Islām, the vast majority are still antagonistic towards Islām. Wherever they see poor Muslims, they are quick to provide financial assistance, schools and hospitals so that these Muslims are won over and easily converted to Christianity. The falsehood of any religion is evident by the fact that it employs the greed for money to propagate itself.

The incident of the Christian delegation from Najrān was discussed in the commentary of verse 61 of Surah Āl Imrān where Allāh commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to issue the challenge of Mubāhala [*mutual imprecation (to prove ones opinion truth)*] to the Christians. Allāh told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Whoever disputes with you concerning this after the knowledge has come to you, then say to them, 'Come! We shall summon your sons and our sons, your wives and our wives, yourselves and ourselves. Then we shall collectively supplicate sincerely (to Allāh) to invoke His curse upon the liars." When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم issued this challenge to the delegation, one of the leaders said, "You know very well that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the true messenger of Allāh and that whatever he says about Isā عليه السلام is undisputedly true. You are also well aware of the fact that none survived of any nation that challenged a Prophet in Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation*). If you wish to disgrace yourselves, then accept the Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation*) and if you wish to remain upon your religion and return to your cities, then enter into a truce with him."

When they saw the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ready for Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation*) with members of his family, another of their leaders told them, *"O*

Christians, I see such faces before me who, if they ask Allāh to move a mountain from its place, He would surely do so. I strongly advise you to avoid the Mubāhala (mutual imprecation) otherwise you would be destroyed and until the day of Judgment there shall be no Christian left upon the surface of the earth." They then said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"O Abul Qasim* صلى الله عليه وسلم, we have decided to decline the challenge to Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation*). We shall leave you to your religion and we shall remain upon ours... This incident clearly portrays the stubbornness of the Christians. Despite being convinced of the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's true messenger, they chose rather to deny it and suffer the consequences of the Hereafter.

This is their attitude up to this day. Although our Scholars have defeated them in countless debates and proven to them that the Bible has been interpolated and that their religion has been fabricated, they refuse to accept Islām for many political and non-political reasons.

Although the Jews and the Christians regard the religion of each other as false, they stand united in their opposition to Islām. They are intent on destroying Islām, but the light of Islām will not be snuffed by their breaths. Allāh declares, "They try to extinguish the light of Allāh with their mouths, but Allāh will tolerate only that His light be completed even though the disbelievers detest it." [*Surah Taubah (9), verse 32*]

Allāh mentions in the foregoing verses that He *"placed compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him."* Whereas the true followers of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام were imbued with these great qualities, those after them who have no attachment with Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام have harassed the world because of their greed to dominate the world. They plundered the Asian countries and greatly oppressed the people of India in the 1850's. People who truly follow Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and who have mercy and compassion would never cause the devastation that was at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام clearly said to his disciples that a Prophet by the name of Ahmad shall come after him and instructed them to follow him. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to them, they dispelled him as a magician. They disobeyed their Bible, refused to accept the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and even lost the compassion and mercy that was supposed to be their hallmark. They now subscribe to the Trinity and Atonement, which has left them soiled in every type of sin. They are left without true monks and priests because their present religious leaders dance to the tune of political leaders. They never voice their opposition to irreligious legislation and are actually being used by politicians to further their own selfish interests.

NOTE : The Christians devised the institution of monasticism with the intention of pleasing Allāh. However, they were unable to observe it properly and finally lost their Religion altogether. Not only did they stop practising the injunctions of their Religion, but they actually forsook their beliefs. They started believing that they have three gods, one of whom died for their sins.

Just as monasticism was not allowed in their religion, it is also not allowed in our Shari'ah. Allāh has made the Shari'ah easy to follow. Allāh says, *"Allāh*

desires ease for you and desires not hardship." [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 185*]

Speaking about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Surah A'rāf, Allāh says, *"He enjoins them to do good, prevents them from evil, permits for them pure things, forbids the impure from them and removes from them the burden and shackles that were upon them."* [*Surah 7, verse 157*]

Verse 6 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah* 5) states, *"Allāh does not want to place any difficulty upon you."* In the same strain, verse 78 of Surah Hajj (*Surah* 22) states, *"He has chosen you and has not placed any hardship upon in religion."*

The above verses make it clear that there are no injunctions in the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم that are burdensome. Sayyidina Uthmān bin Madh'ūn رضى الله عنه narrates that he requested perduty from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to castrate himself. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"He is not of me who castrates someone, nor him who is castrated. The castration of my Ummah (i.e. the method whereby they can curb their passions) is fasting."* Someone asked, *'Allow us to travel and enjoy vacations."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"The travelling and vacation of my Ummah is striving in the path of Allah."* When someone asked perduty to practise monasticism, he replied, *"The monasticism of my Ummah is that they remain in the Masjid after one Salāh waiting for the next Sahāh."* ["Mishkāt" p. 69]

It is evident that the monasticism practised by the Christians is not allowed in Islām. The Shari'ah of Islām does not permit a person to remain a bachelor when he is able to marry. Islām also commands people to care and provide for their families and to associate amicably with people. The Shari'ah allows a person to eat and dress well on condition that his food and clothing are acquired legally and he is not guilty of ostentation and extravagance. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Eat, drink and spend in charity as long as there is no extravagance and boastfulness involved." [*"Mishkāt" p. 377*]

It is best to adopt simplicity in one's dressing because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas always simple. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person who forsakes wearing beautiful clothing out of humility, Allāh shall dress him in the garments of honour. The person who marries for Allāh 's pleasure, Allāh shall give him the crown of a king to wear."* [*Ibid*]

Of course, one should not wear simple clothing so that one may beg from people or so that one may appear pious to others. It should never be for worldly gains. Performing Fardh (obligatory) and Nafl (mandatory) Salāh, observing Fardh (obligatory) and Nafl (mandatory) fasts and standing long hours in Ibādah during the nights does not fall into the ambit of monasticism.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Never make things hard for yourselves because Allāh will then also make matters hard for you. A group of people made things hard for themselves so Allāh made it also hard for them. Those left in the monasteries are the ones remaining of this group. "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited the verse: "They invented monasticism which We did not ordain for them but they did it in search of Allāh's pleasure. However, they did not observe it as it ought to have been observed." [*Abu Dawūd v. 2 p. 316*]

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه reports that three persons enquired from the wives of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم concerning his practices of worship. When they were informed, they considered it to be little and said, *"What are we in comparison to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم? Allāh has forgiven all his sins. (While this is sufficient for the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم because of his innocence, we need to make more effort)."* One of them said that he will perform Salāh the entire night through. The other said that he will fast daily and the third exclaimed that he would remain aloof from women and never get married.

In the meantime the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم returned and asked them whether they were making these statements. He then told them, *"By Allāh! Indeed I am the one who fears Allāh the most and the most abstinent from all of you. However, I fast (Nafl (mandatory) fasts) and there are days when I do not fast. I perform Salāh (at nights) and I sleep, and I also marry. Whoever disregards my practices is not of me." [Bukhari v. 2 p. 758]*

It should be noted that because the Religion is easy, every person is able to carry out the injunctions of Religion. It does not mean that the injunctions suit people's desires. It also does not mean that a person is free to do as he pleases in Religion. If this were so, the Shari'ah would have never specified injunctions of Hālāl *(lawful)* and Unlawful. There would then be no obligation of Salāh, fasting, Zakāh, Hajj and Jihād. This interpretation of an easy religion is misleading.

Sayyidina Abu Umāma رضی الله عنه narrates that they (the Sahāba) were travelling with the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم on a Jihād campaign when they passed by a cave that had good water and edible vegetation. When a Sahābi رضی الله عنه expressed the wish to spend his life there in isolation to worship Allāh, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said to him, "I was not sent with Judaism or Christianity. Rather, I was sent with a religion that is straight and easy to practise. I swear by The Being in whose hands is the life of Muhammad صلی الله علیه وسلم, a morning or evening in Allāh's path is better than this entire world and its contents. Your standing in the rows of Jihād is better than sixty years of Salāh." [*"Mishkāt" p. 334 from Ahmad*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم has himself declared the religion of Islām to be an easy religion. This religion strikes the perfect balance between abstinence from the world and participation in the affairs of the world. While one may seek what is Hālāl, one should also refrain from the Unlawful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَءَامِنُواْ بِرَسُولِهِۦ يُؤۡتِكُمۡ كِفۡلَيۡنِ مِن رَّحۡمَتِهِۦ وَيَجۡعَل لَّكُمۡ نُورٗا تَمۡشُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ (28) لِّئَلَّا يَعۡلَمَ أَهۡلُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ أَلَّا يَقۡدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَيۡءٖ مِّن فَضۡلِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَنَّ ٱلۡفَضۡلَ بِيَدِ ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلۡفَضۡلِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ (29)

(28) O you who believe.' Fear Allāh and believe in His apostle, He shall grant you two shares of His mercy, create a light for you to walk in and forgive you. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (29) So that the People of the Book may

know that they have no power over Allāh's grace and that all grace is in Allāh 's hand. He grants it to whoever He pleases. Allāh is the Possessor of immense grace.

THE CHRISTIANS WHO ACCEPT ISLĀM ARE PROMISED A DOUBLE SHARE OF REWARD

Commentators state that the first of the above two verses is addressed to the Christians. Addressing them, Allāh states, *"O you who believe* [in Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام]! *Fear Allāh and believe in His apostle* [Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], *He shall grant the two of you shares of His mercy..."*

Sayyidina Iyādh bin Himār Mujāshi'ī رضى الله عنه narrates that once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed them in a sermon saying, *'Indeed my Lord has commanded me to tell you of those things that he has taught to me today and about which you have no knowledge. Allāh has said that the wealth He gives to anyone is Hālāl (nothing will become Unlawful by the declaration of any person, as the polytheists used to do). Allāh has also said, 'I have created man upon the true religion and the devils have averted them from it. These devil's (plural of devil) have made things Unlawful for them that I have declared Hālāl (Lawful). They have also instructed them to ascribe partners to Me, whilst I have sent no warrant for this.' Without doubt, Allāh gazed at the people of the world. He declared the Arabs and the non-Arabs as despicable save for those who remained from the Ahlul Kitāb (people of book)."* [*Muslim v. 2 p. 385*]

These people who remained from the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)* were those who followed Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and who did not change their religion at all. It is these people whom Allāh addresses in the above verse. They are encouraged to accept the religion of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم according to the bequest of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. In return, Allāh would grant them double reward; one for sincerely following Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and the other for following Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. Those who truly followed Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام believed in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم before he appeared and declared their belief when he announced his apostleship.

Allāh says about them in Surah Qasas, *"Those to whom We have given the Book from before believe in it (the Qur'ān). When it is recited to them, they say, 'We believe in it. It is definitely the truth from our Lord. Indeed, we were subservient (i.e. Muslims) from before (i.e. we were aware of the coming of the Qur'ān).' These people will be granted their reward twice on account of their patience. They resist evil with good and spend from what We have given them."* [*Surah 28, verses 5 2-54*]

This verse of Surah Qasas also makes it clear that the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of book*) who accept Islām will be given double reward. In the letter that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent to Heraclius, the Emperor of Rome, it was said, *'Accept Islām, you will be left in peace and granted your reward twice."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 5*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the following three groups of people will receive their reward twice:-

1). *Those People of the Book, Who Believed in their Prophets* عليهم السلام *and then also believed in Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم.

2). *Those slaves who, together with fulfilling the errands of their masters, also take care to fulfil the obligations of Islam upon them.*

3). *Those people who marry their slave women after educating them thoroughly and freeing them.* [Bukhari v.1 p.20]

One may ask, *"Believing in any Prophet entails believing in all the Prophets* عليهم السلام *Therefore, the person who believes in the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *without formerly belonging to the Ahlul Kitāb (People of Book) believes in all the* Prophets عليهم السلام. *Why is it then that only when a person from the Ahlul Kitāb becomes a Muslim his reward is doubled? Why is their reward greater?"*

It should be understood that a double is not necessarily more than a single. For example, the double of ten is twenty, which is less than the single figure of forty. In addition to this, the verses and Ahadīth that mention this reward do not state that the reward will be double of that which the average Muslim receives, but that the person will receive the reward twice or receive *"two shares of mercy"*. It is not specified how much reward will be granted twice. As the verse of Surah Qasas makes it clear, their reward will be *"on account of their patience"*, indicating that they had to endure great trials in their lives. When a person deserves greater rewards, it is only fair that he gets it. Others have no right to object to this. Can the rewards of Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه be equal to that of a person who did not suffer as much as he did?

Together with receiving their rewards twice, Allāh also promises the Ahlul Kitāb (*People of book*) that he shall *"create a light"* for them to walk in. this refers to a light in their hearts whereby they will be able to remain steadfast on Belief and be able to practise the injunctions of Religion with conviction. Allāh adds, *"and forgive you. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Allāh shall do this and makes it known "So that the People of the Book may know (on the Day of Judgement) that they have no power over Allāh's grace and that all grace is in Allāh 's hand. He grants it to whoever He pleases. Allāh is the Possessor of Immense grace."

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the Ahlul Kitāb (people of book) who did not accept Islām said to the Muslims, "The People of the Book who believe in your Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *shall receive a double reward whereas everyone else will receive just a single reward. We and you are therefore on par with a reward each." It was then that the above verses were revealed. Allāh tells such people that by merely claiming that they are entitled to a single reward will not secure them salvation in the Hereafter. It is Allāh who reserves the prerogative to reward people and He has promised this for the believers.*

Although only the Christians were addressed in the above verses, the phrase *"So that the People of the Book may know"* refers to both the Jews and the Christians. These people entertained the belief that they have a right to Heaven because they are family of the Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh makes it clear to them that He shall decide who is entitled to enter Heaven and who is not. He shall permit into Heaven only those who believe in His final Holy Prophet Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

PARA TWENTY-EIGHT

سورة المجادلة

Madinan	Surah Mujādalah	Verses 22

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

قَدْ سَمِعَ ٱللَّهُ قَوْلَ ٱلَّتِى تُجَٰدِلُكَ فِى زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَآ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ (1) ٱلَّذِينَ يُظَٰهِرُونَ مِنكُم مِّن نِّسَآئِهِم مَّا هُنَّ أُمَّهَٰتِهِمْ ۖ إِنْ أُمَّهَٰتُهُمْ إِلَّا ٱلَّٰٓـِٔى وَلَدْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنكَرًا مِّنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُورٌ (2) وَٱلَّذِينَ يُظَٰهِرُونَ مِن نِّسَآئِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا۟ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَتَمَآسَّا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ تُوعَظُونَ بِهِۦ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (3) فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَتَمَآسَّا ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَإِطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ مِسْكِينًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (4)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Allāh had certainly heard the speech of the lady who debated with you concerning her husband and who complained to Allāh. Allāh was listening to your discussion. Verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing. (2) Those of you who practise "Zihār" with their wives, their wives are not their mothers. Their mothers are only those who have given birth to them. Indeed they are merely making foolish and false statements. Verily Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Forgiving. (3) Those who practise "Zihār" and then wish to retract what they say, they will have to free a slave before the couple can touch each other. This is the advice Allāh gives you and Allāh is Informed of what you do. (4) The one who cannot do this should fast for two consecutive months before the couple can touch each other. The one who cannot even do this should feed sixty poor people. This (injunction) is so that you believe in Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. These are the limits set by Allāh and the disbelievers shall have a painful punishment.

THE LAWS OF "ZIHĀR"

The foregoing verses make reference to an incident concerning a Sahābiya lady رضى الله عنها. Because the Surah speaks about her debate with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم , the Surah has been named Surah Mujādala (The Surah of the Debate). It should be understood at the outset that before Islām came to them, the Arabs used two methods to prohibit their wives from themselves other then by divorce. The one method was called *"Īla"* and the other *"Zihār"*. Īla takes place when a husband swears that he will never approach his wife. This was discussed in the commentary of verse 226 of Surah Baqarah.

The, second method called Zihār entailed telling one's wife, *"You are like the back of my mother to me (i.e. Unlawful for me)."* Because the statement includes the word *"zahar"* (back), the act is called Zihār, which is a derivative of *"zahar"*. This act is referred to as *"Zihār"* in the Ahadīth and books of Islāmic jurisprudence.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE REVELATION OF THE ZIHĀR VERSES

A Sahābiya lady by the name of Sayyidah Khowla bint Tha'laba رضى الله عنه was married to Sayyidina Aws bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه. When he once intended to cohabit with her, she refused in the best interests of his welfare. However, he became upset and immediately blurted out the words, *"You are like the back of my mother to me."* He soon regretted his statement, but told her that she was now Unlawful for him. Hearing this, Sayyidah Khowla رضى الله عنها exclaimed, *"By Allāh! This cannot be divorce."*

She then went to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and presented her case thus, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! When my husband married me, I was young and rich. My husband has since consumed all my wealth and youth. Now when the members of my family have all been scattered and I am an old woman, he has carried out Zihār with me. He now regrets his act. Is there any way by which the two of us can be reunited?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied by saying, *"You are Unlawful for him."*

She said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! I swear by the Being Who revealed the Qur'ān to you! My husband never used the word 'Talāq' (divorce). I have children from him and I am most beloved to him." When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reiterated his earlier reply, she said, "I shall present my case in Allāh's court. I have lived with my husband for too long." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to her that as far as he understood the matter, she was Unlawful for her husband and that no clear injunction had been revealed to him in this regard.

During her discussion with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, she added that if her small children had to be left with her husband, they would be destroyed. On the other hand, if they were left with her, they would probably die of starvation. As she was saying this, she raised her eyes to the heavens saying, "O Allāh! I plead my case before You. Reveal a command to Your Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that my difficulty is alleviated." This was the first time that a Muslim practised Zihār.

At that point, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها said to Sayyidah Khowla رضى الله

عنها, *"Enough! Do you not see the change you are effecting on the face of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*?"* At that stage, revelation had begun to descend to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, which made it appear as if he were in a slumber. When the revelation finished, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidah Khowla رضى الله عنها to summon her husband. When she brought him, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verses of Zihār before them.

After relating the incident, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها said, "Blessed is the Being Who hears all voices. Being in the same room, I could not hear some of the things that the lady said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, yet Allāh was hearing everything and revealed verses of the Qur'ān in this regard."

Allāh says, *"Allāh had certainly heard the speech of the lady who debated with you concerning her husband and who complained to Allāh. Allāh was listening to your discussion. Verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing."* Because Sayyidah Khowla's رضى الله عنها husband thought them to be divorced while she did not, Allāh first mentions the status of Zihār before mentioning the penalty.

Therefore, Allāh says, *"Those of you who practise "Zihār" with their wives (should know that) their wives are not their mothers."* By stating the words of Zihār, a person's wife neither becomes his mother nor does she attain the status of his mother. Allāh makes it clear that *"Their mothers are only those who have given birth to them."* It is Unlawful for a person to marry his mother and his wife cannot be made Unlawful like his mother merely by uttering some foolish words.

Allāh Ta'āla then mentions the despicable nature of Zihār when He says that husbands who practise Zihār "are merely making foolish and false statements." A mere statement of this nature cannot alter the status of a man's wife. All it does is that it makes him sinful for attempting to alter Allāh's laws. When Allāh has made his wife Hālāl (*Lawful*) for him, who is he to then declare her to be Unlawful for him? However, should a man repent and offer the penalty, he should bear in mind that *"Verily Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Forgiving."*

THE KAFFĀRA (PENALTY) FOR ZIHĀR

Allāh then mentions the penalty to absolve a person from Zihār, thereby restoring the marriage to normality. The above verses state three courses of action in sequence. Allāh says firstly, *"Those who practise 'Zihār' and then wish to retract what they say, they will have to free a slave before the couple can touch each other."* The clause *"before the couple can touch each other"* specifies that before the slave is freed the couple can neither cohabit nor do anything that leads to intercourse such as kissing, embracing, etc.

"This is the advice Allāh gives you..." This penalty is a means of securing forgiveness as well as a means of ensuring that the person does not repeat his act. If a person indulges in intercourse with his wife before freeing the slave, Allāh will punish him for this transgression because *"Allāh is Informed of what you do."*

Allāh continues, *"The one who cannot do this should fast for two consecutive months before the couple can touch each other."* This is the second penalty for a person who is unable to free a slave. He may resort to this course only when he

cannot afford a slave or when slaves are not available, as is the case nowadays. He will have to live separately from his wife during the course of the two months.

Allāh mentions the third means as, *"The one who cannot even do this should feed sixty poor people. This (injunction) is so that you believe in Allāh and His messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم*" i.e. so that you fulfil all Allāh's commands and refrain from all that He has prohibited. Allāh then reminds people, "These are the limits set by Allāh and the disbelievers shall have a painful punishment."*

SPECIFIC LAWS CONCERNING ZIHĀR

Ruling: A person will be guilty of practising Zihār when he likens his wife to his mother's back, thigh or private part.

Ruling: The same will apply when a man likens his wife to any of the above parts of his sister, paternal aunt or nursing mother.

Ruling: If a man says that his wife is like his mother, without likening her to any part of the body, his intention will be taken into account. If he says that he intended to divorce her by these words, she will be divorced. If he says that he intended Zihār, Zihār it will be. However, if he says that he merely meant that his wife deserves honour like his mother, it will be of no consequence i.e. neither divorce nor Zihār.

Ruling: A person may free any type of slave as expiation for Zihār. It makes no difference whether the slave is male or female, mature or immature, Muslim or disbeliever. Of course, the slave should neither be blind nor without both arms or both legs.

Ruling: When observing the two month's fast, the fasts of the month of Ramadhān may not be included because these are already obligatory. It is also not permissible that any of these fasts be observed during days in which fasting is prohibited.

Ruling: If a person cohabits with his wife during the two months of fasting, he will have to begin fasting all over again. Because the phrase *"before the couple can touch each other"* is general in its meaning, a person will be guilty of disrupting the succession of fasts even if he cohabits with his wife during the night. If he does so during the day, the fast of that day will also be nullified.

Ruling: The Kaffāra (*penalty*) will be fulfilled by feeding one poor person two meals for sixty days. One may also feed two meals to sixty poor people on a single day. In each case, the poor should be fed to their fill. The Kaffāra (*penalty*) will also be fulfilled by giving a poor person half a *"Sā"* (approximately 1.6 kg) of wheat or one *"Sā"* of dates or barley for sixty days. The equivalent price of these items may also be given.

Ruling: If the wife is divorced after Zihār or she passes away, the Kaffaara (*penalty*) will be waived. However, the husband is still required to repent.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحَآدُّونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ كُبِتُوا۟ كَمَا كُبِتَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ وَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَآ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ

وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ۝٥ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوٓا۟ ۚ أَحْصَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۝٦

(5) Verily those who oppose Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم will be disgraced like those before them were disgraced. We have certainly revealed clear signs and the disbelievers shall suffer a humiliating punishment. (6) On the Day (of Judgement) Allāh shall raise them all and inform them of the deeds they carried out. Allāh has kept record while they have forgotten. Allāh is Witness over everything.

THOSE WHO OPPOSE ALLĀH AND THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم SHALL BE DISGRACED

The above verses speak about the disgrace that the disbelievers will suffer in this world and in the next. Allāh says, *"Verily those who oppose Allāh and His messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم *will be disgraced like those before them were disgraced."* Consequently, the polytheists of Makkah suffered a humiliating defeat in the battles they fought against the Muslims. The reason for their humiliation is referred to by the phrase, *"We have certainly revealed clear signs"*. Because the disbelievers refused to accept the clear signs and verses that Allāh revealed, they will have to suffer punishment. In addition to the disgrace of this world, *"the disbelievers shall suffer a humiliating punishment"* in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* as well.

Allāh continues, *"On the Day (of Judgement) Allāh shall raise them all and inform them of the deeds they carried out. Allāh has kept record (of their deeds) while they have forgotten."* Although man will be unable to remember the deeds he carried out in the world and all the words he spoke throughout his lifetime, *"Allāh is Witness over everything."* Allāh never forgets and shall remind people of their deeds, which are also recorded by the recording angels. According to these words and deeds, people will either be rewarded or punished.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَىٰ ثَلَٰثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَآ أَدْنَىٰ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ ۖ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝٧

(7) Do you not see that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth? Whenever there is a secret gathering of three, He is the fourth. When there are five, He is the sixth and whenever there are less or more, He is with them wherever they may be. Then on the Day of Judgement Allāh will inform them of the deeds they carried out. Verily Allāh has knowledge of everything.

ALLĀH HAS KNOWLEDGE OF ALL SECRET MEETINGS

Describing Allāh's all encompassing knowledge to readers of the Qur'ān,

the verse reads, *"Do you not see that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth? Whenever there is a secret gathering of three, He is the fourth. When there are five, He is the sixth and whenever there are less or more, He is with them wherever they may be."* Allāh has knowledge of everything that a group of any size discusses, regardless of the measures of secrecy they adopt. *"Then on the Day of Judgement Allāh will inform them of the deeds they carried out. Verily Allāh has knowledge of everything."*

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا عَنِ النَّجْوَىٰ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنَاجَوْنَ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَمَعْصِيَتِ الرَّسُولِ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا لَمْ يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَيَقُولُونَ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا
يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ حَسْبُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿8﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
إِذَا تَنَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَتِ الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿9﴾ إِنَّمَا النَّجْوَىٰ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَيْسَ
بِضَارِّهِمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿10﴾

(8) Can you not see those who were prevented from holding secret meetings but who then returned to what they had been prevented from? They secretly convene to conspire sin, transgression and disobeying the messenger. When they come to you, they greet you with words that Allāh does not greet you with and they say to themselves, "Why does Allāh not punish us for what we say?" Sufficient for them is Hell which they shall enter, and it is the worst of places to return to. (9) O you who believe! When you convene secret meetings, then do not do it to conspire sin, transgression and disobeying the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. Rather hold these secret meetings for purposes of virtue and Taqwa (*piety*). Fear Allāh to Whom you shall all be gathered. (10) Secret meetings are really from Satan to cause grief to the believers but can do nothing to harm them except with Allāh's permission. In Allāh only should the believers trust.

THE MISCHIEF OF THE JEWS AND THE HYPOCRITES

In addition to all their other acts of mischief, the Jews often convened secret meetings. The Arabic word *"najwa"* is used for these secret meetings. The commonly used term *"Munājāt"* is derived from this word and is used to refer to the secret supplication that a person makes to Allāh, which none but Allāh hears.

The Jews were arch-enemies of Islām and the Muslims, and one of their acts of mischief was that they used to sit alongside the streets and glare at any Muslim who passed by them. They then used to wink at each other and start whispering among themselves. The hypocrites also joined them in this act, caused much hurt to the Muslims. When the Muslims complained to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about this, he forbade them from repeating this in future. However, they did not heed his words and continued doing as they used to. It was with regard to this that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Can you not see those who*

were prevented from holding secret meetings but who then returned to what they had been prevented from? They secretly convene to conspire sin, transgression and disobeying the messenger."

It was also the practice of the Jews that instead of saying *"As Salāmu Alaykum" ("Peace be on you")* when greeting *the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم, they used to say, *"As Sāmu Alaykum" ("May death come to you")*. In this manner, they cursed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while people thought that they were greeting him. Allāh refers to this evil practice when He says, *"When they come to you, they greet you with words that Allāh does not greet you with "*.

A group of Jews once greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with these vile words when Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها responded by saying, *"May death and a curse come to you."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to her, *"O Ayshah, be lenient because Allāh likes leniency in all matters."* She said, *"O the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*, did you not hear what they said? I have merely told them what they said." [Bukhari v. 2 p. 925]*

Another narration states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You did not hear the reply I gave them. Allāh accepted the curse I made and did not accept the curse they made." [*"Mishkāt" p. 398*]

After saying such things, the Jews used to *"say to themselves, 'Why does Allāh not punish us for what we say?* "'They meant to say that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is truly Allāh's messenger, Allāh would have already punished them for showing disrespect to him. This analogy is incorrect because Allāh has not stated that He will punish people immediately for their sins. While many people are punished in this world as well as in the Hereafter, others are punished only in the Hereafter. One will be foolish to believe that one is not committing a sin merely because one is not being punished.

Allāh says about such people, *"Sufficient for them is Hell which they shall enter, and it is the worst of places to return to."* They are warned that their punishment is awaiting them in Hell, which is worse than any punishment of this world.

THE BELIEVERS ARE CAUTIONED NOT TO APE THE PRACTICES OF THE JEWS

Allāh says, *"O you who believe! When you convene secret meetings, then do not do it to conspire sin, transgression and disobeying the messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم*. Rather hold these secret meetings for purposes of virtue and Taqwa (piety). Fear Allāh to Whom you shall all be gathered. Secret meetings are really from Satan to cause grief to the believers but can do nothing to harm them except with Allāh's permission."* Satan inspired the Jews and the polytheists to do what they did so that the Muslim are hurt by their deeds. However, their plots can do nothing if Allāh does not will it to be effective. *"In Allāh only should the believers trust."* Only Allāh can help one to overcome the harm that one's enemies try to cause.

The religion of Islām is a complete religion. Just as Islām teaches Ibādāt (acts of worship), Islām also offers detailed guidance in matters of social etiquette. One of the finer aspects of social etiquette is that a person should not be hurt physically or emotionally. Physical harm will be discussed in the ensuing verses.

An important aspect of avoiding emotional harm is that people should not speak privately among themselves, leaving out someone who is in their midst. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "When you are three persons together, two of you should not engage in a private discussion until another person joins them. If two will engage in a private discussion, the third one left alone will be hurt because he will think that they are talking about him." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 632*]

If there are more than three persons in a group, two of them may talk privately because the others then have no reason to suspect anything.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا۟ فِى ٱلْمَجَـٰلِسِ فَٱفْسَحُوا۟ يَفْسَحِ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا قِيلَ ٱنشُزُوا۟ فَٱنشُزُوا۟ يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَـٰتٍ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

(11) O you who believe! When it is said to you, "Make way!" in gatherings, then make way, Allāh shall make way[1] for you. And when it is said to you, "Stand up and leave!" then stand and leave, Allāh shall elevate the believers among you and those given knowledge by many stages. Allāh is Informed of what you do.

ETIQUETTE OF GATHERINGS AND THE VIRTUE OF SCHOLARS

The above verses offer two pieces of guidance to the believers. The first is that people sitting in a gathering should make way for those arriving later. They should sit in a manner that there remains sufficient space for others to sit. If they do this, Allāh Ta'āla will be graceful towards them, shower His mercy on them and forgive their sins.

A person arriving late for a gathering should ensure that he does not get anyone up from their place to accommodate him and that he does not force his way into a gathering. At the same time, those seated should try their best to accommodate others. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"No person should get another person up from his place to sit in that place. Yes, you should sit loosely and make place in the gathering."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 928*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"The best gathering is the one that is most accommodating."* Sayyidina Jābir bin Samura رضی الله عنه reports that when they [the companions of prophet *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم] used to join the gatherings of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, they would sit wherever they found place.

Sayyidina Wāthila bin Khattāb رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was once sitting in the Masjid when someone came towards him. Seeing him approach, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم moved from his place to make way for him to sit. The person said, "O the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم! There is ample space (you need not move from your place)." The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Indeed it is the right of a Muslim that his brother makes way for him when he sees him approach." ["*Mishkāt*"

p. 404]

The second guidance is contained in the words, *"And when it is said to you, 'Stand up and leave!' then stand and leave".* This teaches us that we should not sit so long with a person that it causes him difficulty, especially when at his house. The correct method is that one should assess the situation for oneself. One should judge what time has been allocated for one to sit with the person and determine whether one has overstayed one's visit. One should never wait to be told to leave because this would cause greater difficulty to the host.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has written that the companions of the prophet(*Sahābah*) رضى الله عنهم always desired to sit in the gatherings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم until the very end. Allāh revealed the verse to inform them that they ought to leave the gathering when they were told to because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has other needs to tend to.

Another interpretation of the verse is that whenever a Muslim is told to stand up for Jihād or for any other good deed, he should respond immediately.

When the Muslim practises this, *"Allāh shall elevate the believers among you and those given knowledge by many stages."* Although *"those given knowledge"* are also included among the *"believers",* they are mentioned separately because of the elevated status that they enjoy over other Muslims. Whereas they enjoy an elevated status by virtue of their Belief, they have been accorded an even higher rank because of the knowledge of Qur'ān and Ahadīth that they possess. Not only do the Scholars enjoy an elevated status over the average Muslim, they are also superior in status to the Muslim who engages in excessive Nafl (mandatory) Ibādāt.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The virtue of an Āllama (*Scholar*) who carries out his Fardh obligations and then sits down to teach people good things over the worshipper who fasts the entire day and who performs Salāh the entire night, is like my virtue over the lowest among you." In another hadith, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who passes away while seeking knowledge so that the Religion may be elevated, his rank in Heaven will be only one lower than that of the Prophets عليهم السلام."

Sayyidina Uthmān bin Affān رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the Day of Judgement, the Prophets عليهم السلام will be first to intercede, followed by the Scholars and then the Shuhadā (martyrs).

"Allāh is informed of what you do." Every person shall reap the fruit of what s/he does in this world because nothing escapes Allāh.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا نَٰجَيۡتُمُ ٱلرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُواْ بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡ نَجۡوَىٰكُمۡ صَدَقَةٗۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ وَأَطۡهَرُۚ فَإِن لَّمۡ تَجِدُواْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ ءَأَشۡفَقۡتُمۡ أَن تُقَدِّمُواْ بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡ نَجۡوَىٰكُمۡ صَدَقَٰتٖۚ فَإِذۡ لَمۡ تَفۡعَلُواْ وَتَابَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ فَأَقِيمُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُواْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥۚ وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرُۢ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

(12) O you who believe! When you (wish to) speak privately to the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, then offer charity before speaking. This is best for you and purer. If you do not find the means then (know that) Allāh is certainly Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (13) Are you reluctant to offer charity before your private discussions? If you do not do it and Allāh pardons then establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and obey Allāh and His messenger. Allāh is Informed of what you do.

THE COMMAND TO OFFER CHARITY BEFORE SPEAKING PRIVATELY TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

The first of the two verses above commands the believers to offer charity before speaking to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in private. The second verse cancels this command. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Muslims used to pose many questions to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When their constant questioning became taxing on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh revealed the above verse to lessen the burden. The Muslims were now required to offer charity before gaining access to the private company of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When the throngs of questioners were quelled, Allāh cancelled the command and the Muslims were permitted to speak to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without offering charity.

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه relates that this verse was revealed when some people sought permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to enter into private discussion with him. This gave the impression to others that they were perhaps the topic of discussion. When such private discussions began to occupy too much of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم private time, Allāh revealed the above verse so that the practice may stop. [*Qurtubi v. 17 p. 301*]

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه said, *"There is a verse in Allāh's Book that none before and none after me has ever practised. I had a single Dinār (gold coin), which I changed into ten Dirhams (silver coins). I used to offer a Dirham in charity each time I entered into private discussion with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم). Allāh then cancelled the command."* [*Ibn Kathīr v. 4 p. 326*]

Those Muslims who could not afford to offer charity have been precluded from the command by the words, *"If you do not find the means then (know that) Allāh is certainly Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that when the verse: *"O you who believe! When you speak privately to the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, then offer charity before speaking"* was revealed, *The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم* asked him [Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه], *"Do you think that the Muslims will be able to afford one Dinār?"* When Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه said that the Muslims will not be able to afford it, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proposed half a Dinār. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه said that this was also too much. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه what amount would be possible, he said that they would be able to afford a barley grain's weight of gold. To this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"You have reduced the figure a great deal."* It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Are you reluctant to offer charity before your private discussions?"* Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه therefore used to say that it was because of him that Allāh lessened the burden of the Ummah.

Allāh says, *"Are you reluctant to offer charity before your private discussions? If*

you do not do it and Allāh pardons you (by cancelling the order), then (do not fail to practise the other commands of Religion. Therefore) establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and obey Allāh and His messenger."

The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that the phrase *"Allāh pardons you"* denotes that the Muslims sinned by expressing reluctance to offer charity before speaking to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in private. Allāh offered the Muslims the option to compensate for their sin by establishing Salāh, paying Zakāh and obeying all the commands of Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Nothing of this will go unnoticed because *"Allāh is Informed of what you do."*

۞أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ قَوْمًا غَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مَّا هُم مِّنكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى
ٱلْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (14) أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ
(15) ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَـٰنَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ (16) لَّن تُغْنِىَ
عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَـٰدُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ (17)
يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُۥ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ
هُمُ ٱلْكَـٰذِبُونَ (18) ٱسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ ذِكْرَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ ۚ
أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ هُمُ ٱلْخَـٰسِرُونَ (19) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحَآدُّونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ فِى
ٱلْأَذَلِّينَ (20)

(14) Have you not seen those who befriend a nation with whom Allāh is angry? They are neither from among you nor from among them and they knowingly take false oaths. (15) Allāh has prepared a severe punishment for them. Evil indeed is that which they do. (16) They take their oaths as shields and prevent (others) from Allāh's path. Theirs shall be a humiliating punishment. (17) Neither their wealth nor their children can offer them any help against Allāh. They are the inmates of the Fire where they shall abide forever. (18) On the Day (of Judgement) when Allāh shall raise them all, they will take oaths before Him just as they take oaths before you thinking that they are in good stead. Behold! They are certainly liars. (19) Satan has overpowered them and made them forget to remember Allāh. These are the group of Satan. Behold! The group of Satan are at a loss. (20) Verily those who oppose Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم are the most disgraced.

THE FALSE OATHS OF THE HYPOCRITES AND THEIR SPYING FOR THE JEWS

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the above verses were revealed with reference to the hypocrites. These people pretended to be Muslims but maintained strong ties of friendship with the Jews. They also informed the Jews about all the secrets of the Muslims that they learnt while associating with them.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" also reports that a Jew by the name of Abdullāh bin Nabtal always sat in the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم gatherings and kept the Jews informed of many secrets. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once went to his room and said to those with him, *"Shortly, a person will come who has the heart of a tyrant and who sees with the eyes of Satan. Do not speak to him."* After a little while a blue-eyed person appeared. He was none other but Abdullāh bin Nabtal. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called him and asked, *"Why do you and your friends speak ill of me?"* He swore that he did no such thing and immediately went to bring his friends. They all swore that they too had never spoken ill of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Have you not seen those (Hypocrites) who befriend a nation with whom Allāh is angry?"* i.e. they befriend the Jews.

. Although the hypocrites associated with the Jews and the Muslims, Allāh Ta'āla makes it clear to the Muslims that *"They are neither from among you nor from among them."* The hypocrites were never loyal to any party and remained only with that party who would benefit them the most. Even though they used to inform each party that they are loyal to them, they were loyal only to their own welfare. Allāh refers to the same double standards when He says in Surah Nisā, *"Swaying between, they are neither towards these, nor towards those."* The hypocrites carried out the various obligations of Islām merely to show the Muslims.

Allāh says further that the Hypocrites *"knowingly take false oaths."* The Hypocrites knew that they were lying when they took the false oaths, but yet felt no shame. Allāh declares, *"Allāh has prepared a severe punishment for them. Evil indeed is that which they do."*

"They take their oaths as shields and prevent (others) from Allāh's path. Theirs shall be a humiliating punishment." The hpocrites take false oaths to shield themselves against the enmity of the Muslims so that their wealth and children can remain safely theirs. Little do they realise that they are destroying their lives in the Hereafter by their hypocritical stance and their wealth and children will be of no avail them. Allāh says, *"Neither their wealth nor their children can offer them any help against Allāh. They are the inmates of the Fire where they shall abide forever."*

Not only will their evil be restricted to this world, but they will even lie in the Ākhirah. Allāh informs the Muslims, *"On the Day (of Judgement) when Allāh shall raise them all (and ask them about their evil deeds), they will take oaths before Him (denying their evil deeds) just as they take oaths before you thinking that they are in good stead."* However, they cannot lie to Allāh. Allāh asserts, *"Behold! They are certainly liars."* Not only are the Hypocrites guilty of lying, but they are also proud about it and boast about it. While they are concerned about their welfare in this world, they are oblivious about the ruin facing them in the Hereafter.

SATAN HAS OVERPOWERED THE HYPOCRITES

Allāh says, *"Satan has overpowered them and made them forget to remember Allāh."* Because they have forgotten Allāh, they are oblivious of the Hereafter. Their only interest is the world in which Satan makes their evil appear good to them. They therefore think that the disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)* they perpetrate are benefiting them. They are so loyal to Satan that Allāh terms them

as *"the group of Satan."* They labour under the misconception that they are successful. However, they fit perfectly into the intent of the verse that states: *"Verily the losers are those who put themselves and their families at a loss on the Day of Judgment. Behold! That is the evident loss."* Therefore, Allāh declares, *"Behold! The group of Satan are at a loss."*

Allāh Ta'āla continues, *"Verily those who oppose Allāh and His messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم *are the most disgraced."* In fact, every person who enters Hell will be disgraced. In Surah Āl Imrān, Allāh quotes the Supplication of the Believers as, *"Our Lord, indeed You have disgraced the one whom You enter in the fire."* There shall be many groups of people in the fire of Hell. According to the extent of a person's evil, he will be made to suffer disgrace in the Hell. Allāh says about the Hypocrites, *'Most assuredly, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest depth of the fire."* Because they will be in the lowest depths of Hell, they will correspondingly be the most humiliated.

كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا۠ وَرُسُلِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢١﴾ لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ يُوَآدُّونَ مَنْ حَآدَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ أَوْ
أَبْنَآءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَتَبَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ
وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ
رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ
﴿٢٢﴾

(21) Allāh has ordained, "Verily My messengers and I shall certainly be victorious." Indeed, Allāh is Powerful, Mighty. (22) You will not find people who believe in Allāh and the Last Day befriending those who oppose Allāh and His messenger even though they are their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their families. These are the people in whose hearts Allāh has written Belief (faith) and whom Allāh assists, with His mercy. Allāh shall enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow where they shall abide forever. Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. These are the group of Allāh. Behold.' The group of Allāh shall be the only successful ones.

PEOPLE OF BELIEF DO NOT BEFRIEND THE ENEMIES OF ALLĀH EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE RELATED

Whereas the previous verses spoke about those who oppose Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the above verses speak about the sincere believers. When one becomes a sincere believer, there can be no room to accommodate the friendship of people who are antagonistic towards Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is not possible for a believer to befriend an enemy of His Creator and Master. When one becomes Allāh's friend, one cannot owe allegiance to another. One's friendship and enmity are subservient to Allāh's pleasure. One

will strike up a relationship for Allāh's pleasure and forsake a relationship for Allāh's pleasure.

Sayyidina Abu Umāma رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The one who loves for Allāh's sake, hates for Allāh's sake, gives for Allāh 's sake and takes for Allāh 's sake has perfected his Belief." [*Abu Dawūd*]

Echoing this attribute of a bliever Allāh says, *"You will not find people who believe in Allāh and the Last Day befriending those who oppose Allāh and His messenger even though they are their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their families."* People with true Belief are never reluctant to sever ties even with the closest relatives when these relatives oppose the Religion of Allāh. In fact, they will even be prepared to fight them if they confront them in Jihād.

THE SAHABAH رضى الله عنهم *(COMPANIONS OF THE HOLY PROPHETS)* DISPLAY THEIR UNWAVERING BELIEF DURING THE BATTLE OF BADR WHEN THEY FOUGHT THEIR OWN RELATIVES

There were several incidents in the lives of the companions of the prophet *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم when they killed their opponents in battle knowing that the adversary was their close relative. In the Battle of Badr, Sayyidina Abu Ubayda bin Jarrāh رضى الله عنه killed his father Jarrāh, Sayyidina Mus'ab bin Umayr رضى الله عنه killed his brother Ubayd bin Umayr and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه killed one of his close relatives.

After accepting Islām, the son of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Abdur Rahmān said to his father, *"Father, during the Battle of Badr there were many occasions when I could have killed you, but I avoided the opportunities."* Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said to him, *"If I had the opportunity, I would have never advanced until I had killed you."* [*"Sīrah of Ibn Hishām"*]

When the Battle of Badr commenced, three members of the Ansār advanced to meet three of the polytheists in combat. When the polytheists asked them who they were, the Ansār replied that they were from the Ansār. The Polytheists insisted that they wanted to fight their cousins and called to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Send us some adversaries from our own people."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then sent Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ubaydah bin Hārith رضى الله عنه. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه advanced to fight Walīd bin Utba, Sayyidina Hamzah رضى الله عنه tackled Shaybā and Sayyidina Ubaydah bin Hārith رضى الله عنه fought Utba. While Walīd and Shayba were killed, Sayyidina Ubaydah رضى الله عنه mortally injured Utba, who also fatally wounded Sayyidina Ubaydah رضى الله عنه. Sayyidina Ali and Hamzah رضى الله عنه then killed Utba and took Sayyidina Ubaydah رضى الله عنه away. When Sayyidina Ubaydah رضى الله عنه subsequently passed away, *The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"I testify that you are certainly a martyr."* [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" v. 3 p. 273*]

We have mentioned this story to illustrate that the dsbelievers were not only prepared to kill their Muslim relatives in battle, but they actually preferred killing them instead of any other. If this is the case with those who stand to defend falsehood, why should a Muslim care to scrutinise whether his adversary in combat is a relative or not? When a Muslim fights for Allāh's sake, he cannot

afford to feel sorry for those who are out to destroy the Religion of Islām.

Allāh continues to speak about the sincere Believers when He says, *"These are the people in whose hearts Allāh has written Belief (faith) and whom Allāh assists with His mercy."* *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* interprets the Arabic word "rūh" (translated above as "mercy") to mean a special light with which Allāh illuminates the hearts of blievers so that they have serenity and are able to have insight into matters. Allāh adds, *"Allāh shall enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow where they shall abide forever. Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. These are the group of Allāh. Behold! The group of Allāh shall be the only successful ones."*

سورة الحشر

Madinan	Surah Al-Hashr	Verses 24

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَٰبِ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ۚ مَا ظَنَنتُمْ أَن يَخْرُجُوا ۖ وَظَنُّوا
أَنَّهُم مَّانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَىٰهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا ۖ وَقَذَفَ فِي
قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ ۚ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُم بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَٰأُولِي الْأَبْصَٰرِ
﴿٢﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَن كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُ
النَّارِ ﴿٣﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۖ وَمَن يُشَاقِّ اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ
﴿٤﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorifies Allāh. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (2) It was He who removed the disbelievers from among the People of the Book from their homes for the first exile. You never thought that they would emerge and they thought that their fortresses would save them from Allāh, but Allāh's grasp came to them from where they never expected. Allāh cast terror into their hearts and they uprooted their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers. So take heed, O people with insight! (3) If Allāh had not decreed the exile for them, He would certainly have punished them in this world. And in the Hereafter, theirs shall be the punishment of the Fire. (4) This is because they opposed Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. Whoever opposes Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, then (he should know that) verily Allāh punishes very severely.

THE JEWS ARE EXPELLED FROM MADINAH

The Arabic word *"hashar"* refers to gathering people together. The word is used when people leave their place of residence and gather together in another place. It is for this reason that the Day of Judgement is also described as the day

of *"hashar"*. On the Day of Judgement, people from every part of the globe will gather together on the Plains of Resurrection.

The *'first exile"* refers to the expulsion of the Jewish Banu Nadhīr tribe from Madinah. They were sent to a place called Khaybar, which lies a hundred miles north of Madinah. This occurred during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. During the Caliph of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, they were expelled from Khaybar and they proceeded to live in Arīha (Jericho), Tīma and Adhra'āt. This expulsion is referred to as the second exile. Because the Surah speaks about the exile of the Banu Nadhīr, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه used to refer to it as Surah Banu Nadhīr.

Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorifies Allāh. He is the Mighty, the Wise."* Everything in the universe sings Allāh's praises, declaring that He is free from all faults and partners. None can overpower Allāh because He is Mighty and Omnipotent. Everything He decrees is based on His perfect wisdom and is therefore for the best.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, there were three major Jewish tribes there. These were the:

1. *Banu Nadhīr tribe.*
2. *Banu Qurayza tribe.*
3. *Banu Qaynuqa tribe.*

These tribes were reasonably powerful and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم signed a peace treaty with them. The clauses of the treaty specified that the Jews and Muslims would not fight each other and that each will assist the other if an enemy attacks any one of them. However, the Jews breached the treaty. The plight of the Banu Qurayzah was discussed in the commentary of verses 26 and 27 of Surah Ahzāb (Surah 33), while that of the Banu Qaynuqa was discussed in the commentary of verse 12 of Surah Āl Imrān where Allāh says, *"Say to those who disbelieve, 'You shall be vanquished and gathered in Hell, which is the worst of beddings.'"* Their plight will again be discussed later in this Surah. The verses under discussion concern the Banu Nadhīr.

THE REASON FOR THE EXPULSION OF THE BANU NADHĪR

The Battle of Badr occurred during the 2nd year after Hijrah and the Battle of Uhud during the 3rd year after Hijrah. While some historians say that the Banu Nadhīr were expelled before the Battle of Uhud, others maintain that it was after the battle. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once went to the quarters of the Banu Nadhīr to discuss the Diyah (blood money) due for the murder of two members of the Banu Āmir tribe. Amr bin Umayyah killed the two persons and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to pay the Diyah (*Blood money*). When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم approached the Jews of the Banu Nadhīr for financial assistance, they requested that he meet with them in their quarters. Before his arrival, the Jews planned to seat the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم beneath the shade of a particular wall from which one of them was to drop a rock to kill the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. A Jew by the name of Amr bin Jahāsh volunteered for the task.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and they were made to sit on the spot. Before the Jews could put their sinister plan into motion, Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the plot and he quickly stood up from the spot. He then left with his companions for Madinah. When they reached Madinah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Muhammad bin Maslama رضى الله عنه to issue the ultimatum to the Banu Nadhīr that they were to leave the town.

When the message reached the Jews, the hypocrites said to them that they would leave with them if they were forced to and if they had to fight a battle, they (the Hypocrites) would assist them. Mention is made of this promise in verse 11 of this Surah. The Jews grew bold with this promise and sent a message to the Muslims that they would not leave. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prepared the Muslims for battle. He appointed Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه as the Amīr of Madinah in his absence and marched with the Muslims to lay siege to the Jewish fortresses.

When the Muslims arrived, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them to fell the date palms and burn the date plantations of the Jews. The Jews eventually ran out of food and when they realised that the Hypocrites were not going to assist them, they asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to exile them so that their lives may be spared. They requested that they be allowed to take with them as much as their camels could carry apart from weapons. Whereas they were initially bold enough to oppose the order of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh eventually instilled terror in their hearts and they actually begged to be exiled afterwards.

While many historians state that the siege lasted for six days, the historian Wāqidi places the figure at fifteen. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم allowed every three persons from the Banu Nadhīr to take turns riding one camel. To take as much as possible with them on a camel, the Jews even broke down their homes and removed the doors. The Muslims assisted them in this "work. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"they uprooted their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers."* While some of them left for Shām, many settled in Khaybar. The people of Khaybar were very pleased with their arrival and welcomed them with singing and music. The above is reported in Allāma Ibn Kathīr's رحمة الله عليه *"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya"*.

When the Jews shut themselves up in their fortresses, they thought that they were invincible and the Muslims never expected that the Jews would leave the area. However, Allāh cast terror into their hearts and they surrendered themselves. With this background to the incident, one would be able to understand when Allāh says, *"It was He who removed the disbelievers from among the People of the Book from their homes for the first exile. You never thought that they would emerge and they thought that their fortresses would save them from Allāh, but Allāh 's grasp came to them from where they never expected. Allāh cast terror into their hearts and they uprooted their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers. So take heed, O people with insight!"*

The evil practices of the Jews necessitated that they receive punishment in this world just as the Quraysh were punished when many of them were killed in the Battle of Badr. However, Allāh had already decreed that they should suffer banishment and the disgrace that accompanies it. In addition to this, they had to destroy their homes and leave behind much of their belongings. This was to be their punishment in this world, in addition to the inevitable punishment of the Ākhirah. Concerning this Allāh says, *"If Allāh had not decreed the exile for them, He would certainly have punished them in this world. And in the Hereafter, theirs shall be the punishment of the Fire."*

Allāh outlines the reason for this punishment when He says, *"This is because they opposed Allāh and His messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم*. Whoever opposes Allāh and His messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم*, then (he should know that) verily Allāh punishes very severely."* The Banu Qaynuqa was the first Jewish tribe to be expelled from Madinah, followed by the Banu Nadhīr who breached the pact when they attempted to assassinate the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Next was the turn of the Banu Qurayzah, as mentioned in verses 26 and 27 of Surah Ahzāb (*Surah 33*). The Banu Qurayzah were guilty of assisting the polytheists armies who lay siege to Madinah during the Battle of Ahzāb (also known as the Battle of the Trench).

Besides these three large Jewish tribes, there were several smaller tribes in and around Madinah. Ibn Hishām رحمة الله عليه has mentioned the names of these tribes in his biography of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 574*) and Muslim (*v. 2 p. 94*) mention that all the Jewish tribes were expelled from Madinah, including the Banu Qaynuqa and the Banu Häritha. The narration also mentions that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه belonged to the Banu Qaynuqa tribe.

مَا قَطَعْتُم مِّن لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَآئِمَةً عَلَىٰٓ أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيُخْزِىَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿5﴾

(5) Every date palm that you cut or left standing on its roots was by Allāh's permission and to humiliate the sinners.

THE DATE PLANTATIONS WERE CUT BY ALLĀH'S ORDER

When the Muslims lay siege to the fortresses of the Banu Nadhīr, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the companions of the prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم cut down their date plantations and set it alight. The Jews objected by saying, *"O Abul Qāsim! You prevent people from causing anarchy. Is the cutting of the palms not anarchy?"* According to another narration, some of the Immigrants prevented the companions of the prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم from cutting the date palms, telling them that the plantations will soon be booty for the Muslims.

A third narration mentions that after initially commanding the companions of the prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم to cut the palms down, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stopped them. The companions of the prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم then came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asking whether they will be guilty of a sin by cutting the palms down or whether they would be taken to task for leaving

them uncut. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse. [*Ibn Kathīr v. 4 p. 323*]

Allāh says to the companions of the prophets *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم, *"Every date palm that you cut or left standing on its roots was by Allāh's permission and to humiliate the sinners."* Whatever act is done by Allāh's permission will be for the benefit of religion. In this case, the benefit was that the action humiliated the Jews. When the Jews saw their plantations burning, their hearts also burnt with it. With their morale broken and without food, the Jews eventually surrendered and were prepared to enter into a pact with the Muslims. The act of felling and burning the date plantations therefore led to the exiling of the Jews from Madinah and would earn rewards from Allāh. Anything done in obedience to Allāh's command will always earn a person rewards.

وَمَآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ مِنۡهُمۡ فَمَآ أَوۡجَفۡتُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ مِنۡ خَيۡلٖ وَلَا رِكَابٖ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ﴿6﴾ مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ مِنۡ أَهۡلِ ٱلۡقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَيۡ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةَۢ بَيۡنَ ٱلۡأَغۡنِيَآءِ مِنكُمۡۚ وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمۡ عَنۡهُ فَٱنتَهُواْۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ ﴿7﴾

(6) You neither ran your horses nor your camels for the "Fay" that Allāh gave to His messenger, but Allāh grants His messenger authority over whoever He pleases. Allāh has power over everything. (7) The 'Fay" that Allāh granted His messenger from the people of the villages is for Allāh, for the messenger, for the relatives, for the orphans, for the poor and for the travellers so that this wealth may not remain amassed riches with the wealthy among you. Hold fast to what the messenger gives you and refrain from what He prevents you. Fear Allāh, for Allāh punishes very severely.

THE RECIPIENTS OF "FAY"

The wealth that the Muslims receive as booty from the disbelievers by way of a truce without fighting a battle is called *'Fay"*. When the Muslims receive booty after a battle, the booty is referred to as *"ghanīma"* or *"anfāl"*. The recipients of *"anfāl"* were discussed in verse 41 of Surah Anfāl (Surah 8) and the recipients of *'fay"* [illegible]e discussed in the above verses.

Because the Muslims did not have to fight a battle to earn the wealth of the Banu Nadhīr, they were not actually entitled to a share of it. When some Muslims felt that they were entitled to a share, Allāh revealed the verse *"You neither ran your horses nor your camels for the 'fay' that Allāh gave to His messenger, but Allāh grants His messenger authority over whoever He pleases. Allāh has power over everything."* Because Allāh granted the victory to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, it was his prerogative to distribute the wealth as he pleases.

Allāh then outlines the manner in which "fay" ought to be distributed.

Allāh says, *"The 'Fay" that Allāh granted His messenger from the people of the villages is for Allāh, for the messenger, for the relatives, for the orphans, for the poor and for the travellers."* Besides the settlement of the Banu Nadhīr, the Muslims also received 'Fay" from the town of Fidak, from half of Khaybar and from the Banu Uraynah.

Allāh declares that the *'fay"* should firstly be *'for Allāh "*. Many commentators have mentioned that that this is mentioned for blessings, just as Allāh mentions concerning the *"anfāl": "Know that from whatever spoils of war that you acquire, a fifth of it shall be for Allāh."* Other commentators interpret the verse to mean that Allāh has the greatest right to this wealth because everything does belong to Him. Therefore, He shall decree how this wealth will be distributed.

Allāh then says that the next recipient shall be *"the messenger"*. This means that Allāh has informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about those to whom the wealth is to be given, and he would distribute it accordingly. Unlike the *"anfāl "*, a fifth of *'fay"* was not given to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Commentators state that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was granted complete authority over the wealth of "fay" and that the recipients mentioned afterwards in the verse were directives for him.

"The relatives" refers to the family of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who were granted a share during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for the tremendous support they gave to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and to the religion of Islām. The fourth, fifth and sixth recipients mentioned are *"the orphans", "the poor"* and *"the travellers "*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed the *'Fay"* according to the directions of Allāh Ta'āla and also extracted a year's maintenance for his wives from this wealth. The rest of the *'Fay"* was used for the benefit of the Muslim public and for Jihād preparations. Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم possessed complete authority over the *'Fay"*, none of it could be inherited by his heirs because he said, *"We (i.e. the Prophet) do not leave inheritance. Whatever we leave behind is charity."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 436*]

After the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his successors used to distribute the *"Fay"* exactly as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to. Muslim leaders do not have complete authority over *'Fay"* to do as they please and are constrained to follow the directives of the Shari'ah in this regard. *"Fay"* may be used for:

- *Acquiring weapons for Jihād.*
- *Building bridges and roads for the Muslim public.*
- *Seeing to the needs of the Mujāhidīn (Muslim soldiers) and their families.*
- *Paying the (Ulema) Scholars.*
- *Paying the Muslim judges and Zakāh collectors.*

"The relatives" refer to members of the Banu Hāshim and Banu Abdul Muttalib. According to Imām Shāfi'ī رحمة الله عليه and Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal رحمة الله عليه, members of these families will be given a portion of the *'Fay"* according to

the principle of *'for a male is twice the share of a female"*. Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that the Muslim leader is at liberty to distribute the *'fay"* among these families as he deems fit. He may also give it to some and exclude others. According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, this category of recipients was entitled to a share only during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed away, the Khulafa (*Caliphs*) did not appoint a separate share for them. Of course, a member of these families will receive a share if s/he falls into the any of the categories of *"the orphan's "the poor"* or *"the travellers "*. In fact, should any of them fall into these categories, they will receive preferential treatment. Orphans will receive a share only if they are Muslims and poor. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"]*

After mentioning the recipients of *'fay "*, Allāh says that the *'fay"* should be distributed in this manner *"so that this wealth may not remain amassed riches with the wealthy among you. "* The Arabic word *"dūla"* (also pronounced *"dowla")* is derived from the root word "tadāwul" which denotes the passing on of something from one person to another. Wealth should not stagnate with one person or one group of people. When it is distributed through society, more people benefit from it. It is unfortunate that a large portion of even relief funds intended to aid the poor and suffering of many countries but end up with the rich because people have lost their religious conscience and are obsessed with love for wealth.

IT IS FARDH (OBLIGATORY) TO OBEY THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh declares, *"Hold fast to what the messenger gives you and refrain from what He prevents you."* This verse makes it clear that the Qur'ān does not contain every command and prohibition. Allāh has commanded many injunctions and prohibited many others through the agency of His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. These injunctions are found both in the words and actions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When an action was carried out in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he did not object to it, it means that he sanctioned the action. Such an action will therefore be sanctioned in the Shari'ah. Describing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, a verse of Surah A'rāf states, *"He enjoins them to do good, prevents them from evil, permits for them pure things, forbids the impure."* [*Surah 7, verse 157*]

THOSE WHO REFUTE THE AHADĪTH

Nowadays there are many ignorant leaders who reject the authority of the Ahadīth in enforcing injunctions of the Shari'ah. For this reason they reject many injunctions of the Shari'ah. Their claim to be followers of the Qur'ān is false because the Qur'ān explicitly commands:

"Say, 'Obey Allāh and the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم." [*Surah Āl Imrān (2), verse 32*]

"Whoever obeys the messenger has obeyed Allāh and whoever turns away, We have not sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *as a warder over them."* [*Surah Nisā (4), verse 80*]

"Hold fast to what the messenger gives you and refrain from what He prevents

you." [*Surah Hashr (59), verse 7*]

In the light of these verses, it is evident that these people really have no desire to follow the Qur'ān and want only to alter the injunctions of the Shari'ah. It is unfortunate that they accept payment from the enemies of Islām to spread Disbelief among the Muslims (Allāh forbid!).

Bukhari reports the hadith of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه in which he says that Allāh has cursed those women who draw tattoos and those who have themselves tattooed. He says that Allāh also curses those women who trim their eyebrows and those who file their front teeth for beauty. They are all cursed because they seek to alter the appearance of Allāh's creation.

When a woman heard that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه had said this, she came to him saying that she heard he was cursing women. He replied, *"Why should I not curse those whom the Holy Prophet* صلی الله علیه وسلم *has cursed and who are also accursed in Allāh's book?"* The woman told him that she had read the entire Qur'ān but not found any verse to that effect. He remarked, "If you had recited the Qur'ān you would have certainly come across such a thing. Does Allāh not say, *"Hold fast to what the messenger gives you and refrain from what He prevents you."*

She replied that she had read that verse. Thereupon he said that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم had forbidden the actions of those women whom he had cursed. Therefore, the prohibition of these acts are also intended by the Qur'ān since it enjoins practice upon the things prescribed by the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and invokes abstention from those things that he had forbidden. [*"Mishkāt" p. 381, Bukhari v. 2 p. 725*]

Without hesitation, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه directly attributed the statement of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم to Allāh by saying that Allāh curses those women whom the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم cursed. This verse occurs after mention of the distribution of *'fay"to* illustrate that the words of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and those of Allāh are one. Therefore, whatever the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did with the *'fay"* was perfectly correct and pleasing to Allāh. Allāh concludes the verse by saying, *"Fear Allāh, for Allāh punishes very severely."*

لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرِضْوَٰنًا وَيَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

(8) (A share of the "fay" is also reserved) for the poor immigrants who were removed from their homes and their possessions. They seek Allāh 's grace and pleasure and assist Allāh and His messenger صلی الله علیه وسلم. These are the ones who are true.

THE VIRTUE OF THE IMMIGRANTS

The above verse mentions that the Muslims who migrated from Makkah to Madinah (the Immigrants) are also entitled to a share of the 'fay". Suffering

under the oppression of the polytheists, the Immigrants had to leave their possessions in Makkah and arrived in Madinah without anything. The 'fay" would therefore provide invaluable assistance to them. They had no ulterior motives for migrating to Madinah. All they intended was to "seek Allāh's grace and pleasure and (to) assist Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم" by participating in Jihād. Allāh says about them, *"These are the ones who are true"* *i.e.* true in their faith and in practising the injunctions of the Shari'ah.

Although the poor Immigrants may be included in the categories of *"the orphans"*, *"the poor"* and *"the travellers"*, the above verse mentions them separately to highlight their virtue. They deserve special mention because of the hardships and difficulty that they endured for the sake of Islām.

وَٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَٱلْإِيمَٰنَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟ وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(9) (The "fay" is also for) those who made the place (Madinah) their home before them and had made faith their home. They love those who migrate to them and find no want in their hearts for what they (the immigrants) are given. They prefer (others) above themselves even though they are themselves in need. Whoever is saved from the miserliness of the soul are really the successful ones.

THE STERLING QUALITIES OF THE ANSĀR

The verse above speaks about the Ansār of Madinah who had settled in Madinah a very long time before the Immigrants. Allāh says that they also deserve a share of the *'fay"*. Allāh begins by saying that the Ansār had made Madinah their home after arriving from Yemen long before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced his Risālah (Prophethood). A few of them met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم at Mina during the Hajj and accepted Islām. The rest of them accepted Islām afterwards and were such staunch Muslims that they could not be separated from it. Allāh refers to the steadfastness of their belief when he says that the Ansār had *"made faith their home"*.

Praising them further Allāh says, *"They love those who migrate to them"* i.e. they had great love for the Immigrants who arrived in Madinah from Makkah. They did not regard the arrival of the new immigrants as a burden and neither did they think that their arrival would adversely affect their livelihood and earnings. Their love for their Immigrants brethren was sincere and true.

In addition to this, they found *'no want (jealousy) in their hearts for what they (the immigrants) are given."* Whenever the Immigrants were given anything that they were not given, the Ansār bore no grudges. The fourth quality of theirs that Allāh mentions is that *"They prefer (others) above themselves even though they are themselves in need."*

THE MUTUAL LOVE BETWEEN THE MUHĀJIRĪN (*IMMIGRANTS*) AND THE ANSĀR (*INHABITANTS OF MADINAH*)

The books of Ahadīth mention many incidents concerning the love that the Ansār bore for the Immigrants and how they gave the Immigrants preference over their own needs. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Ansār of Madinah actually requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to divide their date plantations between themselves and the Immigrants. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم declined the offer, the Ansār proposed that the Immigrants assist on the plantations and then share in the produce. This the Immigrants accepted. Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked those present who would feed a certain person who was also there. One of the Ansār volunteered and took the person home.

When he reached his home, he informed his wife that the person was the guest of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and that they were to entertain him. When his wife told him that the only food in the house was the children's, he told her to put the children to sleep and to prepare the food for the guest. The couple then devised a plan whereby the wife would put out the lamp while pretending to fix it so that guest would continue eating thinking that the couple were also partaking of the meal. In this manner, the guest ate to his fill while the couple remained hungry the entire night. When the host met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the following day, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, "Allāh liked your deed of remaining hungry while your guest ate. Allāh has therefore revealed the verse: *"They prefer (others) above themselves even though they are themselves in need."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 536*]

One may not conclude that the parents acted wrongly by depriving the children of their food because the children had already eaten supper and the food was being kept for their breakfast. If the children were really hungry, the parents would not have been unable to put them to sleep.

One may also not say that the couple disregarded the laws of Veil (*Hijāb*) by eating together with the guest because the incident took place before the laws of Veil (*Hijāb*) were revealed.

NOTE: Who was the companions of prophets (*Sahābi*) رضى الله عنه who entertained the guest? He was one of the following three persons:

- *Sayyidina Abu Talha Ansāri* رضى الله عنه
- *Sayyidina Abdullāh Bin Rawāha* رضى الله عنه
- *Sayyidina Qais bin Thābit* رضى الله عنه

THE ONE WHO IS SAVED FROM MISERLINESS IS SUCCESSFUL

Allāh says, *"Whoever is saved from the miserliness of the soul are really the successful ones."* This verse speaks of the abominable nature of miserly behaviour. The subtlety in stating *"miserliness of the soul"* instead of just *"miserliness"* can be understood when it occurs that a person's heart wants to contribute in charity but his soul is reluctant. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes quotes certain commentators who are of the opinion that "shuh" (translated above as

"miserliness") actually refers to a kind of miserliness that is coupled with greed.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Beware of oppression because oppression will become darkness on the Day of Judgement and beware of 'shuh' because 'shuh' has destroyed those before you. It prompted them to spill each other's blood and make Unlawful things Hālāl (*Lawful*)." [*Muslim*]

"Shuh" is actually ingrained in man's personality. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"but selfishness ('shuh') has been made present in the souls of men."* [*Surah 4, verse 128*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The worst of traits in a person is 'shuh' that instils terror within him and cowardice that extracts the soul." [*"Mishkāt" p. 165 and Nasa'ī v.1 p.34*]

Another Hadith states that Belief and miserliness cannot share the same heart. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned that miserliness and bad character cannot be combined with Belief. [*Tirmidhi*]

Whenever a person wants to spend in charity, his soul will not want to allow it. However, when he suppresses the desires of his soul and spends, Allāh shall grant him tremendous rewards.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that a person once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which type of Sadaqah (*charity*) earned the most reward. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the most rewarding Sadaqah (*charity*) is the Sadaqah (*Charity*) spent when a person is healthy, when his soul is miserly, when he fears poverty and he is hopeful of becoming wealthy. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then added, *"Do not delay Sadaqah (charity) until the time when your soul is at your throat and you say, 'Give so much to so-and-so and give so much to so-and-so'. However (this is futile because) it has already become the property of so-and-so (since everything will become the property of the heirs when the person dies)."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p.191*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a single Dirham spent in charity while one is alive and well is better than a hundred Dirhams spent while one is on one's deathbed. [*Abu Dawūd*]

There are many people who extravagantly waste large amounts of money on sinful purposes and to win fame. However, they are extremely reluctant to spend on the Wājib *(Compulsory)* and Fardh (obligatory) charities. Many of them withhold even their Zakāh and do not perform their obligatory Hajj. If they do pluck up the courage to perform Hajj, they often do it for show.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Time will pass very fast, deeds will decrease, miserliness will be cast into people 's hearts and murder will increase." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 1046*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has also mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cited the following three factors as means of salvation:

1. *Adhering to the demands of Taqwa (piety) in private and in public.*
2. *Speaking the truth when happy and when angry.*

3. *Being thrifty when rich and when poor.*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then mentioned the following three factors which cause destruction:

1. *Pursuing the demands of one's carnal self.*
2. *Succumbing to the demands of miserliness.*
3. *Being proud about oneself.* [*Mishkāt p. 434*]

Miserliness is an extremely evil trait. One should make every effort to control one's desires, to spend in avenues pleasing to Allāh, to avoid spending in sinful avenues and to avoid extravagance. This is the way to success because Allāh says, *"Whoever is saved from the miserliness of the soul are really the successful ones."*

وَٱلَّذِينَ جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَا وَلِإِخۡوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِٱلۡإِيمَٰنِ وَلَا تَجۡعَلۡ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلّٗا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٞ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

(10) Those who come after them say, "O our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who passed before us with Belief. And do not place any impurity in our hearts against those who believe. O our Lord! Indeed You are the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."

THE MUSLIMS AFTER THE IMMIGRANTS AND ANSĀR ARE ALSO ENTITLED TO THE "FAY"

According to most commentators, this verse is linked to those above in that it tells Muslims that all those still to come after the Immigrants and Ansār may also benefit from the *'Fay"*.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once recited the verse, *"Alms are only for the poor, the destitute, the orphans, those appointed to collect them, those whose hearts have to be reconciled, for the freedom of slaves, for those in debt, for the path of Allāh and for the traveller..."* He then said, *"Alms (Zakāh) are only for these people."* He then recited the verse, *"Know that from whatever spoils of war that you acquire, a fifth of it shall be for Allāh, His messenger, the relatives, the poor, the orphans and the travellers..."* He then said, *"The spoils of war shall be for those mentioned in this verse."*

Thereafter, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه recited the verses, *"The Fay' that Allāh granted His messenger from the people of the villages is for Allāh, for the messenger, for the relatives, for the orphans, for the poor and for the travellers...* (up to the verse) *Indeed You are the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* These verses include all Muslims. Every Muslim is entitled to a share of the Fay'. If I stay alive (long enough), even a shepherd tending his flock among the Sard Him yar' will receive his share where he is, without having a drop of perspiration on his brow in acquiring in it." [*Ibn Kathīr v. 4 p. 340*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that *"those who come after them"* are the

third category of people whose needy members are worthy recipients of the *'fay* ", the first two categories being the Immigrants and the Ansār. This refers to the people *"who followed them (the Immigrants and Ansār) with sincerity"*. Those who revile the Immigrants and Ansār and regard them as disbelievers (like the Rawāfidh) cannot fall into this category and are therefore not worthy recipients of the *'fay* ".

Allāh speaks about the supplication that these 'believer make. In the first supplication they ask, "O *our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who passed before us with Belief.* "We learn from this verse that one should seek Allāh's forgiveness for oneself as well as for one's Muslim brothers. By seeking forgiveness, one will be forgiven and one's stages in Heaven will be elevated.

The second supplication they make is, *"And do not place any impurity in our hearts against those who believe. O our Lord! indeed You are the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* The Arabic word "ghil" (translated above as "impurity") includes enmity, jealousy, hatred and all types of ill feelings that may exist between two persons. Their supplication to Allāh is that He cleanses their hearts from ill feelings against all *"those who believe"* i.e. all believers in the past, present and future.

THE EVILS OF JEALOUSY, MALICE AND ENMITY

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"Avoid enmity between yourselves because this shaves (off good deeds just as a razor shaves off hair)." ["Mishkāt" p. 428 from Tirmidhi]*

Sayyidina Zubayr رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The diseases of previous nations has stealthily crept up to you. The diseases are jealousy and enmity. These traits actually shave. I do not say that they shave hair but they shave off religion." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم) that the doors of Heaven are opened every Monday and Thursday. Whereas Allāh's mercy encompasses everyone, it does not reach the two people who harbour enmity towards each other. Allāh says about them, *"Defer their matter until they reconcile. "*[*Ibid*]

During the period of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, there were a few people in whose hearts the diseases' of the previous Ummahs had crept. Nowadays, there are fully-fledged wars waged between people who claim to be Muslims. The jealousy and enmity that exists between such Muslims leads them to disputes and even murder. They do not even consider making supplication for Allāh to remove the impurities that fill their hearts because they are content with it. It is tragic to notice that such people will exploit every gathering to backbite about fellow Muslims and publicise their shortcomings.

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم clearly informed his companions *(Sahabah)* رضی الله عنهم that they should not speak ill of any companion in front of him [i.e. in front of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم] because he wished to meet every person with a clean heart. [*Tirmidhi*]

THE DEVIATION OF THE RAWĀFIDH

Whereas Allāh praises those who pray for their predecessors the Immigrants and Ansār, the Rawāfidh pride themselves for the hatred they bear for the Immigrants and Ansār. These are the same people who refute the authenticity of our Qur'ān and claim that the real Qur'ān is hidden in some cave with the Mahdi. The enmity they bear towards the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*رضى الله عنهم is so great that they claim that all except a few prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*رضى الله عنهم became disbelievers after the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports that Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها said, *"Allāh has commanded people to seek forgiveness on behalf of the prophet's companions (Sahābah)*رضى الله عنهم *but people have started to swear them."* She then recited the verse: *"Those who come after them say, 'O our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who passed before us with Belief. And do not place any impurity in our hearts against those who believe. O our Lord! Indeed You are the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.'"*

Sayyidina Amir Sha'bi رحمة الله عليه once said to Sayyidina Mālik bin Mighwal رحمة الله عليه that the Jews and the Christians are actually better than the Rawāfidh in that if the Jews are asked who were the best people of their Ummah, they will say that the best are the companions of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Similarly, if the Christians are asked who are the best of their Ummah, they will say that the best were the companions of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام (the Hawāriyīn). However, if the Rawāfidh are asked who are the worst people of their Ummah, they will reply that the worst people of their Ummah were (Allāh forbid!) the companions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Whereas Allāh has commanded Muslims to pray for the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم, the Rawāfidh prefer rather to revile them. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 321*]

Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه stated that the above verse allocates a share of the *'Fay"* for those Muslims who come after the Immigrants and Ansār and who make Supplication for them. Because the Rawāfidh curse the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*رضى الله عنهم instead of making supplication for them, they are not entitled to any share of the "Fay".

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ
أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ
يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿11﴾ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ قُوتِلُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ
نَصَرُوهُمْ لَيُوَلُّنَّ الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْصَرُونَ ﴿12﴾ لَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ
مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿13﴾ لَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرًى
مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿14﴾

(11) Have you not seen the hypocrites who say to their disbelieving brothers of the People of the Book, "If you are exiled, we shall definitely leave with you and we shall never ever obey the word of anyone concerning you. We shall also certainly assist you if you are fought." Allāh testifies that they are certainly liars. (12) If they (the Jews) are exiled, they (the hypocrites) will not leave with them and if they are engaged in battle, they will not assist them. Even if they have to assist them, they will surely turn their backs after which they will not have any assistance. (13) Without doubt the fear that they have in their hearts for you is more than the fear they have for Allāh. This is because they are a nation that has no understanding. (14) Their combined forces will fight you only from fortified strongholds or from behind walls. The in-fighting among them is intense. You think that they are united whereas their hearts are divided. This is because they are a nation that has no knowledge.

THE FALSE PROMISES THAT THE HYPOCRITES MADE TO THE JEWS

As was discussed at the beginning of the Surah, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ordered the Jews of the Banu Nadhīr tribe to leave Madinah, they refused. The leader of the hypocrites Abdullāh bin Ubay bin Salūl sent a message to the Jews informing them that they should not leave because he and his companions would support them. This promise of support is mentioned in the verses above. They told the Jews that if the Jews were forced out of Madinah, they would show their solidarity and leave with them. On the other hand, if they are forced to do battle against the Muslims, they (the hypocrites) would fight with them. They also added that if anyone had to dissuade them from siding with the Jews, they would ignore the request.

However, Allāh knew that they were insincere and declares, *"Allāh testifies that they are certainly liars."* *Allāh adds, "If they (the Jews) are exiled, they (the hypocrites) will not leave with them and if they are engaged in battle, they will not assist them."* This was exactly what happened. When the Jews informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they would not leave Madinah, the Muslims lay siege to their fortresses. Expecting help from the hypocrites, the Jews locked themselves in their fortresses. However, no help came and when they eventually lost hope in the hypocrites, they were forced to accept banishment rather than face execution.

Even when the Jews began taking their homes apart to take along whatever they could, they received no assistance from the hypocrites. On this occasion no battle was fought. However, even if there were a battle and if the hypocrites did emerge to fight with the Jews, they would have certainly deserted the battlefield, leaving the Jews to fend for themselves. Referring to this Allāh says, *"Even if they have to assist them, they will surely turn their backs after which they will not have any assistance."*

Addressing the Muslims, Allāh says further, *"Without doubt the fear that they have in their hearts for you (Muslims) is more than the fear they have for Allāh."* A Muslim fears Allāh more than anything else. On the contrary, the hypocrites had more fear for others than they had for Allāh. This was because their claim to have Belief was false. They feared that if they assist the Jews against the Muslims,

their pretence would be exposed.

"This is because they are a nation that has no understanding" i.e. the hypocrites fear the Muslims more than they fear Allāh because they do not understand Allāh's greatness and awesome power.

Allāh further informs the Muslims that the *"combined forces (of the Jews and hypocrites) will fight you only from fortified strongholds or from behind walls."* This was exactly how the Banu Nadhīr faced the Muslims. The same was the case when the Muslims fought the Jews in Khaybar. However, despite these measures, the Muslims still defeated the Jews. Describing their condition Allāh says, *"The in-fighting among them is intense. You think that they are united whereas their hearts are divided. This is because they are a nation that has no knowledge."*

كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ قَرِيبٗاۖ ذَاقُواْ وَبَالَ أَمۡرِهِمۡ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ﴿١٥﴾

(15) Their example is like those shortly before them who tasted the consequence of their deed. Theirs shall be a painful punishment.

THE MISCHIEF AND EXILE OF THE JEWISH BANU QAYNUQA TRIBE

As mentioned earlier, there were three major Jewish tribes in Madinah. The first was the Banu Nadhīr, whose expulsion from Madinah has already been discussed. The second was the Banu Qurayza whose men were executed and whose women and children were taken into captivity. Their incident is mentioned in verses 26 and 27 of Surah Ahzāb (*Surah 33*). The plight of the third tribe, the Banu Qaynuqa is mentioned in the above verse. All three tribes entered into a peace treaty with the Muslims, in which they agreed never to fight the Muslims and never to assist an enemy of the Muslims. However, all three tribes betrayed the Muslims.

The Banu Qaynuqa was the first of the three Jewish tribes to be expelled from Madinah. When the Muslims returned from the Battle of Badr, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم assembled the Jews in the Banu Qaynuqa marketplace and said to them, *"Fear Allāh and accept Islām otherwise you may suffer the same plight as the Quraysh. You know very well that I am Allāh's Holy Prophet. Your scripture speaks of me and you have taken a covenant with Allāh that you will follow the Holy Prophet mentioned in your scripture."* The Jews replied by saying, *"O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم*! Do not deceive yourself the defeat of the Quraysh makes no difference to us. They are amateurs and have no idea about warfare. You defeated them quite by chance. By Allāh! If you ever have to face us in battle, you will know who we are!"*

During this period it occurred that a woman went to sell milk to a Jewish goldsmith. When the Jews insulted her honour, war was declared between the Muslims and the Banu Qaynuqa. The Muslims surrounded them for fifteen days and the Jews were forced to surrender. Eventually they told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they were prepared to accept whatever decision he passed. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was about to pass the decision that they were to be executed when Abdullāh bin Ubay said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"How can you kill a tribe of seven hundred men in a single morning or evening when they have*

always been assisting me?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then allowed him to decide their fate. He decided that they should be exiled from Madinah. They then proceeded to settle in the Adhra'āt. [*"Fat'hul Bāri" v. 7 p. 330*]

The verse therefore means that the plight of the Banu Nadhīr *"is like those shortly before them who tasted the consequence of their deed (i.e. like the Banu Qaynuqa). Theirs shall be a painful punishment."* Just as the Banu Qaynuqa were expelled from Madinah, the Banu Nadhīr were also expelled. Both therefore suffered disgrace in this world and cannot avoid the punishment of the Hereafter.

كَمَثَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ ٱكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿16﴾ فَكَانَ عَٰقِبَتَهُمَآ أَنَّهُمَا فِى ٱلنَّارِ خَٰلِدَيْنِ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿17﴾

(16) Like the example of Satan when he says to man, "Be a disbeliever." So when man becomes a disbeliever Satan says, "I have nothing to do with you. Indeed I fear Allāh, the Lord of the universe." (17) The plight of the two is that both shall suffer in the Fire forever. This is the punishment of the oppressors.

SATAN FOOLS MAN AND LEADS HIM INTO THE FIRE OF HELL

The above verses make it clear that the way in which the Hypocrites made false promises to the Jews and then left them in the lurch is not a new practice. Satan employs the same tactic when he coaxes people to be disbelievers. When they eventually succumb to his ploy and perpetrate disbelief, he withdraws and says, *"I have nothing to do with you. Indeed I fear Allāh, the Lord of the universe."* Verse 48 of Surah Anfāl (*Surah 8*) clearly depicts how Satan promised the disbelievers support before the Battle of Badr but then deserted them in the heat of the moment.

Emulating the practice of their mentor, the hypocrites left the Jews to suffer the consequences on their own. Such deceit is not unusual from people who were determined to disobey Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Muslims should beware of people who claim to be saints but whose objectives are actually to attain wealth and fame. Just as Satan claims to fear Allāh, they also make the claim merely to deceive people. They will also absolve themselves of blame before Allāh and will want nothing to do with their followers in the Hereafter.

Allāh says that both Satan and his followers shall suffer in Hell forever. The verses warn especially the hpocrites not to follow Satan and not to persist with dsbelief because the result will be eternal damnation in Hell.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿18﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ

ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ (19) لَا يَسْتَوِىٓ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۚ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ
هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ (20) لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُۥ خَٰشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ
خَشْيَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (21)

(18) O you who believe! Fear Allāh and let every soul see what it has sent ahead for tomorrow. Fear Allāh! Indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do. (19) And do not become like those who forgot Allāh after which He made them forget themselves. Those are the sinners. (20) The people of the Fire and the people of Heaven cannot be the same. Only the people of Heaven are successful. (21) If We have to reveal this Qur'ān to a mountain, you will see it yield and shatter out of fear for Allāh. These are parables that We illustrate to people so that they reflect.

THE COMMAND TO FEAR ALLĀH AND TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE HEREAFTER

Allāh instructs Muslims to be concerned about their lives in the Hereafter and to make an effort to secure entrance into Heaven. Allāh says, *"O you who believe! Fear Allāh and let every soul see what it has sent ahead for tomorrow."* This verse twice repeats the instruction to fear Allāh. Commentators mention that the first instruction to fear Allāh is to remind people to repent for past sins, while the second instruction informs them that they should always be conscious about repenting for their sins in future. Other commentators state that the first instruction to fear Allāh is to remind people to perform their Faraidh (*obligations*) and compulsory at while the second instruction warns people to fear Allāh so that they do not perpetrate sins.

Allāh concludes the verse by saying, *"Fear Allāh! Indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do."* Allāh is Aware of both the good and the evil deeds that a person carries out. People should bear in mind that Allāh will reward them for every good deed that they perform regardless of how small it may be. At the same time, the disbelievers, polytheists and sinners must not forget that Allāh is Informed about every evil they perpetrate, even though they may carry out the evil most secretively. One should always bear in mind that one will soon leave this world and head for the Hereafter where one will have to render an account for one's deeds. It will then be decided whether one shall spend eternity in Heaven or in Hell.

APPRECIATE LIFE

Muslims are urged to think about the deeds they have sent ahead to the Hereafter. The more good deeds one does, the more rewards one will earn in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. The fewer good deeds one does in this world, the less one will have in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. On the contrary, the more sins one commits in this world, the greater will be the punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* and vice versa. One should therefore never pass the opportunity to do good and one should do one's utmost to avoid sins. In addition to one's obligatory duties, one should also be particular about remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*, Tilāwah (*recitation of the Holy Qur'ān*), acts of generosity and all forms of optional deeds. One should

not waste one's life in sin and futile acts.

THE VIRTUES OF REMEMBRANCE OF ALLĀH *(DHIKR)*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "For me to recite *'Subhān Allāh wal hamdu lillāh wa lā ilāha illallāhu wallāhu akbar'* is more beloved than everything upon which the sun shines." [*"Mishkāt" p. 200 and Muslim v.2 p.345*]

One should not lose a second of one's life without engaging in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*. One should value every moment and use it to improve one's lot in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. We must never waste our time in futile pastimes such as reading the lies in newspapers and joining people in wasteful customary practices. Life is like one's capital in a business with which one enters the marketplace of this world to trade. In this world one will either purchase one's ticket to Heaven or to Hell. With the passing of every second and minute, man's capital is decreasing. Whereas many people are securing their passes to Heaven by engaging in good deeds, there are also many who are having their passports stamped for Hell.

It is indeed tragic that when people will be granted their rewards for their good deeds in the Hereafter, those who had purchased their destruction will stare in disbelief and regret the precious moments they wasted in this life. However, their remorse will not profit them in the least. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said "A date palm is planted in Heaven for the person who recites *'Subhānallāh hil Azīm wa bi hamdihi'*." [*Tirmidhi, Chapter of Supplication*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the night in which he was taken for Mi'rāj (*Ascension*), he met Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام who said to him, *"O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! Convey my Salāms (greetings) to your Ummah and tell them that the soil of Heaven is excellent and the water is fine. Heaven is an empty ground and its plants are, 'Subhān Allāhi wal Hamdu Lilāhi wa Lā Ilāha IllAllāhu Allāhu Akbar'."* [*"Mishkāt"*]

This hadith tells us that the plants of Heaven will be planted there when a person carries out good deeds. Allāh causes the excellent soil and water of Heaven to yield a fine crop when a person plants the seed by carrying out good deeds.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who recites *'Subhān Allāh'* a hundred times in the morning and *'Subhān Allāh'* a hundred times in the evening shall earn the reward of performing Hajj a hundred times. The person who praises Allāh (by reciting *'Al Hamdu Lillāh'*) a hundred times in the morning and again praises Allāh a hundred times in the evening shall earn the reward of contributing a hundred horses for Jihād. The person who recites *'Lā Illāha Illallāhu'* a hundred times in the morning and recites *'Lā Ilāha Illallāhu'* a hundred times again in the evening will have the reward of freeing a hundred slaves from the progeny of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. A person who recites *'Allāhu Akbar'* a hundred times in the morning and *'Allāhu Akbar'* a hundred times in the evening, none shall match his reward except the person who recited these words as much as he did or more than him." [*"Mishkāt" p. 202 from Tirmidhi*]

AN INCIDENT DURING THE TIME OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Sayyidina Jarīr bin Abdullāh رضى الله عنه narrates that they were once with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم during the early part of the morning when some people came. They had no proper clothes and wrapped themselves in woollen shawls. They were all from the Banu Mudhar tribe and their swords hung from their necks. Seeing their poverty, the face of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed colour. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم kept entering and leaving his house (busy doing something) until the sun had crossed its meridian. He then instructed Sayyidina Bilāl عليه السلام to call out the Adhān for Zuhr. When the Zuhr Salāh was over, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mounted the Mimbar (pulpit) and recited the first verse of Surah Nisā (*Surah* 4), which reads, *"O mankind, fear your Lord who created you from a single soul, created from it its spouse, and spread multitudes of men and women from the two. Fear that Allāh by Whom you ask of each other and (be wary of) family ties. Verily Allāh is Vigilant over you."*

Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the foregoing verse of Surah Hashr, *"O you who believe! Fear Allāh and let every soul see what it has sent ahead for tomorrow. Fear Allāh! Indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then exhorted the companions of prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم to give Sadaqah (*charity*). According to their means, the companions of prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم added their contributions. While some gave one Dinār, others gave one Dirham, some clothing and food. The narrator of the hadith mentioned that some brought a Sā of wheat, another a Sā of dried dates and some even gave half a date. Later, a man from among the Ansār presented a bag full of coins (either full of gold or silver coins). The bag was so heavy that he was barely able to carry it. Thereafter, the companions of prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم started donating much more until there was a heap of food and a heap of clothing in the Masjid. The narrator says that the face of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم became so resplendent that it appeared as if it were covered with liquid gold.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told the companions of prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم , *"Whoever sets a good example in Islām shall have the reward of his deed and the reward of the deeds of all those who follow his example without reducing the rewards of the others in the least. On the contrary, whoever sets a bad example in Islām shall be burdened with the sin of his deed as well as the burden of all those who follow his example without their burdens being lightened in the least."* [*Muslim v. 1 p.* 327]

"DO NOT BECOME LIKE THOSE WHO FORGOT ALLĀH"

Addressing the Muslims, Allāh states further, "And do not become like those who forgot Allāh."People who forgot Allāh are those who neglected Allāh's commands, adopted lives of sin and who drifted so far from Allāh that they eventually forgot about Him. Because they forgot Allāh, Allāh "made them forget themselves" i.e. they forgot that they are soon to die and will suffer the consequences of their behaviour in Hell. By concentrating all their efforts in acquiring this world, they deprive themselves of the bounties of Heaven. Allāh adds that these people "are the sinners". The author of "Ruhul

Ma'āni" interprets this to mean that these people are the ones who have reached the pinnacles of sin.

Allāh asserts, *"The people of the Fire and the people of Heaven cannot be the same. Only the people of Heaven are successful."* The people destined for Hell are far from being successful even though they may think that they are.

THE MIGHT OF THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh says, *"If We have to reveal this Qur'ān to a mountain, you will see it yield and shatter out of fear for Allāh."* The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* (*v. 28 p. 61*) writes that this verse admonishes man for the hardness of his heart and lack of submission and reflection when reciting the Qur'ān. Whereas man behaves indifferently towards the dynamic verses of the Qur'ān, a mountain would submit and shatter to bits if it were granted intelligence and the Qur'ān revealed to it.

The author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* adds that the mountain would shatter at the thought that it is unable to fulfil the rights of the Qur'ān. It is unfortunate that man fails to realise the gravity of the responsibility that comes with the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān contains so many such *"parables"* that Allāh illustrates *"to people so that they reflect."*

هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ عَـٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَـٰدَةِ ۖ هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿22﴾
هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَـٰمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿23﴾ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْخَـٰلِقُ ٱلْبَارِئُ ٱلْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿24﴾

(22) He is Allāh besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Beneficent, the Most Merciful. (23) He is Allāh besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. He is the Sovereign, the Most Pure, the Giver of peace, the Giver of security, the Vigilant, the Mighty, the Overpowering, the Glorious. He is Pure from whatever they ascribe as partners to Him. (24) He is Allāh, the Creator, the Perfect Maker, the Fashioner Who has the most beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise.

ALLĀH HAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL NAMES WHICH ILLUSTRATE HIS ATTRIBUTES

Describing Allāh's divinity, the verse states, *"He is Allāh besides Whom there is none worthy of worship."* Only Allāh can be worshipped and all the gods that people worship besides Him cannot match Him at all. Allāh then describes many of His various attributes:

First. Allāh says that He is "Ālimul Ghaybi wash Shahādah" *("He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen")*. Everything that man can see and those things that he cannot see are in Allāh's knowledge. Allāh knows everything that has occurred in the past, what is at present and everything that will be in the future. Allāh also knows everything that cannot take place and things that will not take place. That knowledge of the unseen that the Prophets عليهم السلام possessed was from Allāh. They only knew what Allāh had informed them about and did not possess knowledge of everything unseen.

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Allāh does not inform you of the unseen, but Allāh chooses whom He pleases from His messengers."* In a verse of Surah Jinn Allāh says,

"He is the Knower of the unseen and He has informed none of His unseen knowledge except his selected messengers."

Second. *"He is the Beneficent, the Most Merciful."* Both the words *"Rahmān"* and *"Rahīm"* are derived from the root word *"rahmah"* (mercy). Both words are emphasised forms and denote someone who is extremely merciful. Some commentators say that the word *"Rahmān"* contains more emphasis than the word *"Rahīm"*. Allāh's extreme mercy is manifest in this world and will be clearer in the Ākhirah.

Third. Allāh says that He is *"Al Malik" ("the Sovereign")*. All the kings and sovereigns in this world are really not kings at all because they are Allāh's slaves and creation. Allāh is the King of all kings because everything belongs to Him. Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn *"Pure is that Being in Whose hand lies the reins of everything, and to Whom you will all be returned."*

Fourth. Allāh is *"Al Quddūs" ("the Most Pure")*. Allāh is free of all defects and faults in every respect. After completing the Witr Salāh, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite, *"Subhānal Malikul Quddūs" ("Glory be to the Sovereign, the Most Pure")*. When saying this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to lengthen the sound of the *"wāw"* in the word *"Quddūs"* i.e. the sound of the two in the word *"Quddūs "*.

Fifth. Allāh is also *"As Salām" ("Giver of peace")*. Many scholars have translated the word *"As Salām"* to mean that Allāh is Perfect in every respect. None of His attributes can deplete in any way.

Sixth. Allāh is *"Al Mu'min" ("the Giver of security")*. Only Allāh keeps His creation safe and secure in this world. He blesses the hearts of His pious servants with contentment in this world and will do the same for them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"The greatest fright shall not distress them."* Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"O My bondsmen! You shall have no fear today, neither will you grieve."* Some scholars mention that *"Al Mu'min"* means that Allāh had made a pledge with His creation that He shall never oppress them.

Seventh. Allāh is *"Al Muhaymin" ("the Vigilant")*, meaning that Allāh is Watchful over all His creation.

Eighth. Allāh is *"Al Aziz" ("the Mighty")*. Nothing can stop Allāh from doing what He wants and He has the power to do whatever He wants.

Ninth. Allāh is *"Al Jabbār" ("the Overpowering"),* meaning that He has the power to do as He pleases with His creation without any interference. Some commentators mention that *"Al Jabbār"* means that Allāh is the one who sets matters right. Allāh restores losses, mends broken things and rectifies situations.

Tenth. Allāh is *"Al Mutakabbir" ("the Glorious").* This word means that Allāh's majesty is perfect. When the word is used to describe creation, it means that the person is proud. Whereas pride is regarded as a flaw in creation, it is not so when attributed to Allāh because Allāh truly possesses all good and virtue. When any person has a good quality, it is because Allāh has granted it to him and it is not his own doing. Instead of regarding himself as a great person and looking down on others, the person should rather be grateful to Allāh.

Allāh says at the end of Surah Jāthiya, *"All majesty (pride) is His in the heavens and the earth and He is the Mighty, the Wise."* Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh Ta'āla says that pride and greatness and glory are His special attributes and He will cast into Hell whoever tries to wrestles from Him.

Eleventh. Allāh is *"Al Khāliq" ("the Creator").*

Twelfth. He is also *"Al Bāri" ("the Perfect Maker").* The translations of the above two attributes are alike. Some Scholars have mentioned that *"Al Khāliq"* means that Allāh creates things in perfect proportion and *"Al Bāri"* means that He brings things from non-existence into existence. Commentators also state that *"Al Khāliq"* means that Allāh creates things without the need to refer to any model. He is also able to create other things from the original in a most perfect manner. *"Al Bāri"* means that He is Able to create many things in the same manner without any differences between them.

Thirteenth. Allāh is *"Al Musawwir" ("the Fashioner").* Allāh has created all the various types of bodies and phenomena. He makes things that can easily be distinguished even though they may be of the same species. Allāh says in Surah Infitār , *"(Allāh) created you, perfected you, gave you due proportion and made you in the fashion He desired."*

Allāh continues by saying that He *"has the most beautiful names."* Allāh possesses each of the attributes that His various names denote. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"Allāh the most beautiful of names, so call Him by them."* A verse of Surah Bani Isrā'īl reads, *"Say, 'Call unto Allāh or call unto Rahmān. By whichever name you call to Him, to Him belongs the most beautiful names."*

A hadith of Bukhari states that Allāh has 99 names and whoever learns them well shall enter Heaven. For further information one may refer to the commentary of verse 180 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) as well as the book *"Al Hisnul Hasīn"* written by Allāma Jazari رحمة الله عليه Allāh's 99 names are mentioned in Tirmidhi and also in Ibn Mājah. where some names are mentioned that are not in Tirmidhi.

Allāh concludes the Surah by stating, *"Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise."*

NOTE : Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Whoever recites, 'A-ūdhu Billāhis Samī 'il Alīm Minash Shaytānir Rajīm' thrice in the morning and then recites the last three verses of Surah Hashar, Allāh shall appoint seventy thousand angels to invoke Allāh 's mercy on him until the evening. If he dies during that day he will die as a martyr. Whoever does this in the evening, Allāh shall appoint seventy thousand angels to invoke Allāh's mercy on him until the morning. If he dies during that night he will die as a martyr."* [*Tirmidhi*]

سورة الممتحنة

Madinan	Surah Al-Mumtahinah	Verses 13

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ (۱)

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءَ تُلۡقُونَ إِلَيۡهِم بِٱلۡمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدۡ كَفَرُواْ
بِمَا جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡحَقِّ يُخۡرِجُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمۡ أَن تُؤۡمِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ رَبِّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ خَرَجۡتُمۡ
جِهَٰدٗا فِي سَبِيلِي وَٱبۡتِغَآءَ مَرۡضَاتِيۚ تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيۡهِم بِٱلۡمَوَدَّةِ وَأَنَا۠ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَآ أَخۡفَيۡتُمۡ وَمَآ
أَعۡلَنتُمۡۚ وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡهُ مِنكُمۡ فَقَدۡ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ (1) إِن يَثۡقَفُوكُمۡ يَكُونُواْ لَكُمۡ أَعۡدَآءٗ
وَيَبۡسُطُوٓاْ إِلَيۡكُمۡ أَيۡدِيَهُمۡ وَأَلۡسِنَتَهُم بِٱلسُّوٓءِ وَوَدُّواْ لَوۡ تَكۡفُرُونَ (2) لَن تَنفَعَكُمۡ أَرۡحَامُكُمۡ
وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡۚ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ يَفۡصِلُ بَيۡنَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ (3)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) O you who believe! Do not take my enemy and your enemy as friends, offering your friendship to them when they reject the truth that has come to you. They have exiled the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and yourselves because you believe in Allāh your Lord. If you emerge to strive in My path and to seek My pleasure (you would not befriend them). You secretly show friendship to them when I am Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal. The one who does this from among you has certainly strayed from the straight path. (2) If they find you, they will be enemies to you and extend their tongues and hands towards you with evil intent. They wish that you were disbelievers. (3) Neither your relatives nor your children will profit you on the Day of Judgement when you will be separated. Allāh is Watchful over what you do.

PROHIBITION AGAINST BEFRIENDING ALLĀH'S ENEMIES

The above verses were revealed concerning Sayyidina Hātib bin Abi Balta'a رضى الله عنه, who wrote a secret letter to the polytheists of Makkah. Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه records the incident in his Chapter of Jihād (*religious war*) (*p. 422*), Chapter of Battles (*p. 567*) and Chapter of Tafsīr (*exegesis*) (*p. 726*). Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called for him, Sayyidina Zubayr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Miqdād رضى الله عنه and (according to some narrations) Sayyidina Abu Marthad Ghanawi رضى الله عنه, who were all experienced horsemen.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them saying, "Ride until you reach Rawda Khākh. There you will find a polytheist woman with a note from Hātib addressed to the polytheists."

The prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم raced their horses to the place where they saw the woman riding a camel. They made the camel sit and searched for the note. However, they could not find it. They told themselves that she must have the note with her because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could never be wrong. When they asked her for the' note, she denied having it in her possession. They then adopted a sterner attitude and threatened to remove all her clothing if she did not surrender the note. Seeing their determination, she removed the note from her waistband. Other narrations state that she removed the note from the plait of her hair. The note was indeed from Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه addressed to the polytheists. It informed them that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم intended attacking Makkah. The riders returned with the note to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt of the contents of the note, he asked Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه what the matter was. Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه explained, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Please do not be hasty. I did not write this note because of disbelief or because I have become an apostate. I am not one of the Quraysh and was only living with them . The others who have migrated with you have relatives in Makkah by virtue of whom their families and property are protected. Because I have no relatives there I wanted to do a favour for the Quraysh so that they become indebted to me. In this way, they will see to the protection of my family."

After hearing the story, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"He has spoken the truth."* Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه then exclaimed, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! *Permit me to behead this hypocrite."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Hātib participated in the Battle of Badr and Allāh has said that the participants of Badr are forgiven irrespective of what they do."* It was with reference to this incident of Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه that Allāh revealed the opening verse of Surah Mumtahina. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه then remained silent.

"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" (*v. 4 p. 284*) reports the text of Sayyidina Hātib's رضى الله عنه note. This narration mentions that Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! I did not write the note because I am a hypocrite or because I wished to betray the messenger of Allāh. I knew that Allāh would grant victory to His Prophet and complete His Religion irrespective of whether I wrote or not. However, I was always an alien in Makkah and my mother still lives there. So I wished that the people of Makkah become indebted to me (and care for my mother on account of this)."

However, this notion of Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه was incorrect because since the Muslims were due to conquer Makkah in a few day's time, the polytheists would only have been indebted to Sayyidina Hātib رضى الله عنه for a few days. Thereafter he would have been reunited with his family in Makkah.

Allāh addresses the Muslims saying, *"O you who believe! Do not take my enemy and your enemy as friends, offering your friendship to them when they reject the truth that has come to you. They have exiled the messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and yourselves*

because you believe in Allāh your Lord." A muslim should not express friendship with the disbelievers even if it is superficial. Because of the way in which the disbelievers behave towards the muslims, they do not deserve the friendship of the muslims. Allāh tells the muslim, *"If you emerge to strive in my path and to seek My pleasure (you would not befriend them)."*

Allāh chides the Muslims when He says, *"You secretly show friendship to them when I am Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal. (A Muslim should not regard this as a minor offence because) The one who does this from among you has certainly strayed from the straight path."*

The disbelievers harass and expel the Muslim from their homelands for the mere reason that the Muslims regard Allāh to be their Lord. Their hostility does not stop at this. Allāh says, *"If they find you, they will be enemies to you and extend their tongues and hands towards you with evil intent."* Wherever the disbelievers meet the Muslims, they will make every attempt to harm them either physically or verbally. This is because *"They wish that you were disbelievers."*

Addressing the Muslims at large, Allāh continues *"Neither your relatives nor your children will profit you on the Day of Judgement when you will be separated. Allāh is Watchful over what you do."* This verse is especially pertinent to the incident of Sayyidina Hātib رضی الله عنه because he wrote the note with the intention of securing protection for his relatives in Makkah. Little did he realise that his concern for his relatives meant betraying the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, an act which can well jeopardise his position on the Day of Judgement. This concern for one's relatives will certainly not be able to rescue one from Allāh's punishment in the Hereafter.

Allāh says in Surah Luqmān, *"O people! Fear Allah and beware of the day when a father will be of no avail to his son, nor will a child be of any avail to his father."* [*Surah 31 verse 33*]

Allāh says in Surah Abas, *"So when the deafening scream will come, on that day man will flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his wife and his sons. On that day every one of them will be preoccupied with a predicament that will make him oblivious of another."* [*Surah 80, verses 3 3-37*]

On the Day of Judgement, no person will want anything to do with another person and will stay far away from anyone who is likely to ask for assistance. If this is the situation with relatives, one can well imagine how non-relatives will avoid one. When a person is aware of this, he will realise that it is futile for him to risk his welfare in the Hereafter for the sake of relatives who will be unable to assist him there.

THE LAW OF THE SHARI'AH CONCERNING SPYING

In his compilation of Ahadīth, Imām Abu Dawūd رحمة الله عليه has included a chapter titled *"The Law Concerning a Spy who is a Muslim*. In this chapter he has quoted the incident of Sayyidina Hātib رضی الله عنه. The next chapter speaks about the spy who is a Dhimmi (*A non-muslim who lives in a muslim country and pays tax to Government.*) and the following chapter concerns the spy who is a legal visitor to a Muslim country (termed as a Musta'min). The fourth type of spy

that could be a menace to a Muslim country is a person from a hostile Kuffar (*disbeliever's*) country (termed as a Harbi). The fifth type of spy is a person belonging to a country that has entered into a peace treaty with the Muslims (termed a Mu'āhid)

The Fuqahā (Muslim jurists) differ in their opinions concerning these five types of spies. In his commentary of Muslim, Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه states that all the Fuqahā unanimously agree that the Harbi spy should be executed. Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه and Imām Awzā'ī رحمة الله عليه state that a Dhimmi and a Mu'āhid spy will be guilty of breaching the pact they have made with the Muslims. They are therefore at the mercy of the Muslim leader who is at liberty to enslave them or to execute them. According to the other Fuqahā the treaty will be nullified only if the treaty contained a clause that prohibits spying.

If a spy is a Muslim, the Muslim leader will decide on an appropriate punishment according to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, Imām Awzā'ī رحمة الله عليه and Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه. However, he may not be executed. According to Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه, the Muslim leader is at liberty to do as he deems appropriate.

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِيٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُواْ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُاْ مِنكُمْ
وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُواْ
بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَآ أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيْءٍ رَّبَّنَا
عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿4﴾ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا
رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿5﴾ لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ
وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْآخِرَ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِيُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿6﴾

(4) There was certainly a sterling example for you in Ibrahīm عليه السلام and those who followed him when they said to their people, "We exonerate ourselves from you and from that which you worship apart from Allāh. We reject you, and enmity and hatred have surfaced between yourselves and us forever until you believe in One Allāh." (There was a sterling example in all he did) except the statement of Ibrahīm عليه السلام to his father when he said, "I shall definitely pray for your forgiveness and I have no power to do anything for you before Allāh. O our Lord! In You do we trust, to You do we turn (in repentance) and to You shall we return." (5) "O our Lord! Do not make us a test for the disbelievers and forgive, O our Lord. Indeed You are the Mighty, the Wise." (6) There was certainly an excellent example in them for those of you who have faith in Allāh and the Last Day. As for him who turns away, Allāh certainly is Independent, Most worthy of praise.

THE STERLING EXAMPLE OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

There will always be a conflict between belief and disbelief. The Qur'ān

quotes the discussion between Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, his father and his people in various verses. In the above verse, Allāh quotes what he and his followers said to the disbelievers of their nation.

Allāh says, *"There was certainly a sterling example for you in Ibrahīm عليه السلام and those who followed him when they (explicitly) said to their people, 'We exonerate ourselves from you and from that which you worship apart from Allāh. We reject you (because we reject your beliefs) and enmity and hatred have surfaced between yourselves and us forever until you believe in One Allāh".*

The Muslims should never be ambiguous when expressing their stand in relation to the disbelievers. They must never bow before the disbelievers and should make it clear to the disbelievers that they cannot be the same. The disbeliever should never get the impression from the Muslims that their religion of disbelief is also correct or that Islām is weak. They must clearly get the message that the Muslims do not belong with them and that they do not belong with the Muslims as long as they remain disbelievers.

Among the things that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said to his father was: *"I shall definitely pray for your forgiveness and I have no power to do anything for you before Allāh"* i.e. I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment if you chose to remain a disbeliever. In keeping with this promise to seek forgiveness for his father, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed to Allāh saying, *"Forgive my father, for he is among those who have deviated."* Scholars have mentioned that this was a Supplication to Allāh to forgive his father after guiding him to Islām. Allāh says in Surah Taubah, *"Ibrahīm عليه السلام sought forgiveness for his father only because of a promise that he had made to him. When it became clear to him that his father was Allāh 's enemy (when he died as a disbeliever), he exonerated himself from him."* [*Surah 9, verse 114*]

In the above verses Allāh makes it clear that the practices of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his followers were excellent examples to emulate except his deed of seeking forgiveness for his disbeliever father.

"O our Lord! In You do we trust, to You do wc turn (in repentance) and to You shall we return." While some commentators state that here Allāh quotes some of the supplication that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his followers made to Allāh, others are of the opinion that the verse enjoins all Muslims to make this supplication to Allāh. Added to this are the supplication: *"O our Lord! Do not make us a test for the disbelievers and forgive, O our Lord. Indeed You are the Mighty, the Wise."*

Allāh continues, *"There was certainly an excellent example in them (i.e. in Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his followers) for those of you who have faith in (presenting themselves before) Allāh and (in) the Last Day. As for him who turns away, Allāh certainly is Independent, Most worthy of praise."* If any Muslim wishes to bow before the disbelievers, he will be doing no harm to Allāh because Allāh does not need anyone.

۞عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ ٱلَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُم مِّنْهُم مَّوَدَّةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

﴿٧﴾ لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوْهُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(7) Allāh shall soon create love between you and those who are your enemies. Allāh is Most Capable and Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (8) Allāh does not forbid you from behaving cordially and justly towards those who do not fight you for religion and who do not exile you from your homes. Verily Allāh loves those who are just. (9) Allāh forbids you from befriending only those who fight you for religion, who exile you from your homes and who assist (others) in exiling you. Those who befriend them are certainly oppressors.

MAINTAINING RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE OF ONE'S FORMER HOMELAND AFTER MIGRATING

The prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*رضی الله عنهم who migrated to Madinah still had many disbelievers relatives in Makkah. It occurred to many of the Immigrants that their ties with these disbelievers relatives were now automatically severed. Although it was necessary to terminate friendly relations with the disbelievers, Allāh promised the Immigrants in the above verses that He would soon restore the love between them and their relatives. This occurred upon the conquest of Makkah when the polytheists all accepted Islām. When Makkah was conquered, even the staunchest polytheists accepted Islām, such as Abu Sufyān رضی الله عنه, Suhayl bin Amr رضی الله عنه and Hakīm bin Hizām رضی الله عنه. Until then Abu Sufyān was the Makkan leader who led the polytheists in battle against the Muslims. Suhayl bin Amr was the envoy of the polytheists who negotiated the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah and who would not allow Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه to write *'Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh"* on the treaty.

It is simple for Allāh to guide people and to reunite separated hearts. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Allāh is Most Capable and Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.* "When a person accepts Islām, Allāh forgives all his previous sins. Since Allāh forgives all that a person has done during his life as a disbeliever, Muslims should also adopt the same attitude and should not think that they cannot befriend a person who was an enemy to them until a few days ago.

The disbelievers are of two types. The first type are those who do not fight the Muslims, do not exile them from their homes and do not assist others in carrying out such actions. The other type are those who actively engage in these activities. Concerning the first group Allāh says, *"Allāh does not forbid you from behaving cordially and justly towards those who do not fight you for religion and who do not exile you from your homes. Verily Allāh loves those who are just."* About the second group Allāh says, *"Allāh forbids you from befriending only those who fight you for religion, who exile you from your homes and who assist (others) in exiling you. Those who befriend them are certainly oppressors."*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes Sayyidina Zubayr رضى الله عنه who said that the first group consists of women and children of the disbelievers. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه states that these are the people who accepted Islām but who continued to live in Makkah. The Immigrants and the Ansār severed ties with them because they neglected the Fardh (obligatory) obligation of migrating to Madinah.

Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has narrated that after the Treaty of Hudabiyyah. the Muslims and polytheists were no longer at war and lived in peace. During this period, the mother of Sayyidah Asma bint Abi Bakr رضى الله عنها came to Madinah and expressed a need for some assistance. Since Sayyidah Asma رضى الله عنها was unsure whether it was permissible to spend on a polytheist woman, she asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *'My mother has come and has expressed a need. Should I maintain family ties by spending on her?"* *The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"Yes. Maintain your family ties."* A narrator of this hadith, Sayyidina Sufyān bin Uyaynah رحمة الله عليه says that it was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the verse: *"Allāh does not forbid you from behaving cordially and justly towards those who do not fight you for religion..."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 884*]

The *"Musnad"* of Imām Ahmad رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubayr رضى الله عنه that Qīla bint Abdil Uzza brought a gift for her daughter Sayyidah Asma bint Abi Bakr رضى الله عنها. Because her mother was a polytheist, Sayyidah Asma رضى الله عنها refused to accept the gift and refused to allow her mother into her house. She asked Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها to enquire about the situation from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When she enquired from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh revealed the verse:

"Allāh does not forbid you from behaving cordially and justly towards those who do not fight you for religion..." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then permitted her to accept the gift and to allow her mother into the house.

Allāh clearly forbids Muslims from maintaining friendly ties with those polytheists who fight the Muslims because of their religion and who make every effort to expel the Muslims from their homeland. Concerning those Muslims who befriend such disbelievers, Allāh says, *"Those who befriend them are certainly oppressors."* Such people oppress themselves by exposing themselves to Allāh's punishment when they flout His commands.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا جَآءَكُمُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتُ مُهَٰجِرَٰتٖ فَٱمۡتَحِنُوهُنَّۖ ٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ بِإِيمَٰنِهِنَّۖ فَإِنۡ
عَلِمۡتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤۡمِنَٰتٖ فَلَا تَرۡجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى ٱلۡكُفَّارِۖ لَا هُنَّ حِلّٞ لَّهُمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّۖ وَءَاتُوهُم مَّآ
أَنفَقُواْۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ أَن تَنكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَآ ءَاتَيۡتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّۚ وَلَا تُمۡسِكُواْ بِعِصَمِ ٱلۡكَوَافِرِ
وَسۡـَٔلُواْ مَآ أَنفَقۡتُمۡ وَلۡيَسۡـَٔلُواْ مَآ أَنفَقُواْۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ حُكۡمُ ٱللَّهِ يَحۡكُمُ بَيۡنَكُمۡۖ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ (10)
وَإِن فَاتَكُمۡ شَيۡءٞ مِّنۡ أَزۡوَٰجِكُمۡ إِلَى ٱلۡكُفَّارِ فَعَاقَبۡتُمۡ فَـَٔاتُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتۡ أَزۡوَٰجُهُم مِّثۡلَ مَآ
أَنفَقُواْۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَنتُم بِهِۦ مُؤۡمِنُونَ (11)

(10) O you who believe! When believing women come to you as immigrants, then examine them. Allāh best knows the condition of their Imān (Belief). If you determine that they really are believers, then do not return them to the disbelievers. Neither are these women lawful for the disbelieving men nor are the disbelieving men lawful for these women. Return to them (i.e. to the disbelieving husbands) what they have spent (as dowry). There is no harm if you (Muslim men) marry these women when you give them their dowry. Do not stubbornly cling to your disbelieving wives. Ask for what (dowry) you have spent and let the disbelieving men ask for what they have spent. This is Allāh's command. Allāh decides between you and Allāh is All Knowing, the Wise. (11) If you lose any of your wives to the disbelievers and then have your own back, then pay those who have lost their wives the equivalent of what they have spent. Fear Allāh in Whom you believe.

THE LAW REGARDING WOMEN IMMIGRANTS

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم to Makkah to perform Umrah during the 6th year after Hijrah, he heard that the polytheists were intent on resisting their entry into Makkah. Setting up camp in Hudaybiyyah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه into Makkah to verify the situation. The polytheists sent Suhayl bin Amr as their negotiator to the Muslim's. Finally, the ten clauses of the Treaty were agreed on. The details of this incident were discussed in the commentary of the first seven verses of Surah Fath (*Surah 48*).

The second and third clauses of the treaty read as follows:

- *Any person from the Quraysh who defects to Muhammad (the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) without the consent of his senior will have to be returned.*
- *Any person from Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم companions who defects to the Quraysh will not have to be returned.*

The clauses were still not written when the son of Suhayl bin Amr (Abu Jandal) appeared in the Muslim camp with his feet in fetters. He was held captive in Makkah in this manner because he had accepted Islām, but managed to escape when he heard that the Muslims were at Hudaybiyyah. He pleaded with the Muslims to take him back to Madinah with them. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his father's permission to take him to Madinah, Suhayl flatly refused. He was thus taken back in captivity. His story is lengthy and is mentioned together with the story of his compatriot Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه in the commentary of the first seven verses of Surah Fath (*Surah 48*). When the treaty was concluded, the Muslims slaughtered their *"Hady"* (sacrificial) animals and prepared to return to Madinah.

It was then that some women came to the Muslims and requested to be taken to Madinah because they had accepted Islām. Allāh subsequently revealed the verse: *"O you who believe! When believing women come to you as immigrants, then examine them..." The verse "If you lose any of your wives to the disbelievers..."* was revealed at a later stage.

Allāh says, *"O you who believe! When believing women come to you as immigrants, then examine them. Allāh best knows the condition of their Belief (because He knows the secrets of the heart). If you determine that they really are believers, then do not return them to the disbelievers. Neither are these women lawful for the disbelieving men nor are the disbelieving men lawful for these women."* When a woman leaves the disbeliever country to settle in a Muslim country, her manage to the disbeliever in the disbeliever country will terminate.

Although the clause of the treaty stated that any Muslim from Makkah headed for Madinah should be returned, women were exempted from the clause by mutual agreement. One can therefore not accuse the Muslims of breaching the terms of the treaty. In addition to this, the dowry that the disbeliever husbands paid was returned to them. The disbeliever husbands also realised that their Muslim wives would not be happy living with them. They did not mind that their former wives stay with the Muslims because there was no threat of them being a danger during times of war. The disbelievers therefore did not insist that their wives return to them.

Among the immigrant women who came to the Muslims was Umm Kulthūm, the daughter of the notorious Uqba bin Abi Mu'īt. When her family members tried to get her back, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not hand her over to them. Others like her were Subay'ah bintul Hārith and Umayma bint Bishr. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also did not return them when their families came for them. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 28 p. 76*]

Allāh enjoins, *"Return to them (i.e. to the disbelieving husbands) what they have spent (as dowry)."* This law applied only during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because it was included in a clause of the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah. Women were specially exempted from the clause that demanded Muslims from Makkah to be returned to Makkah after joining the rest of the Muslims in Madinah. However, the polytheists permitted this exemption on condition that the dowry of the migrating women is paid back to the former husband.

The polytheists of Makkah violated the treaty within a year, after which the Muslims conquered Makkah. Once the treaty terminated, the clauses also terminated. Therefore, if a Muslim woman migrates after the treaty, she will not be returned to her husband and the husband and disbeliever country in which she formerly resided will have no claim from the Muslim country.

Allāh continues, *"There is no harm if you (Muslim men) marry these women when you give them their dowry."* This injunction permits Muslim men from a Muslim country to marry those women who migrate to their country. According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, there is no necessity for her to complete her Iddah before remarrying. She may marry a Muslim man immediately after arriving in the Muslim country. However, Imām Muhammad رحمة الله عليه and Imām Abu Yusuf رحمة الله عليه, the two eminent students of Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, state that she has to pass the duration of her Iddah before remarrying. If she is expecting when she reaches the Muslim country, she may remarry only after delivering the child. [*"Hidāyah"*]

The clause *"when you give them their dowry"* does not mean that they cannot be married if the dowry is not paid before marriage. If the couple agree on a

fixed dowry, the husband may pay it before the marriage or undertake to pay it afterwards.

"Do not stubbornly cling to your disbelieving wives." When a man accepts Islām and migrates to a Muslim country, his marriage will terminate if his wife chooses to remain a disbeliever in the *"Dārul Harb"* The marriage will be terminated to the extent that if his former wife has a real sister living as a Muslim in the Muslim country, he may marry her.

"Ask for what (dowry) you have spent and let the disbelieving men ask for what they have spent." This part of the verse enjoins Muslim men to claim their dowry from the "Dārul Harb" if their wives chose to remain in the "Dārul Harb" as disbeliever. Similarly, the Disbelievers husbands of the "Dārul Harb" may claim back the dowries they spent on their wives who have accepted Islām and migrated to the Muslim country. As mentioned earlier, this injunction was repealed once the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah ended.

"This is Allāh's command. Allāh decides between you and Allāh is All Knowing, the Wise." Allāh reserves the right to abrogate commands as and when He pleases because he is best aware of man's welfare and issues commands with perfect wisdom.

"If you lose any of your wives to the disbelievers and then have your own back, then pay those who have lost their wives the equivalent of what they have spent." This verse details that when the wives of Muslim men stay behind in the "Dārul Harb" and Muslim women migrate to the Muslim country from the "Dārul Harb", the dowry money owed to the disbelievers husbands in the "Dārul Harb" may be paid to the Muslim men whose wives remained in the "Dārul Harb". In a similar manner, the disbelievers government will have to pay out their men who had lost their wives to the Muslim country. If the money owed to the disbelievers is more than what was paid to the Muslim husbands, the Muslim country should pay the difference to the "Dārul Harb" government. On the contrary, if the money that the disbelievers government owes the Muslim husbands is more than what the Muslim husbands were paid by the Muslim government, the Muslims should demand the difference from the "Dārul Harb" government. This injunction also ceased to apply after the termination of the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah.

Allāh concludes the verse by saying, *"Fear Allāh in Whom you believe."* This phrase enjoins that all Allāh's commands be fulfilled and all His prohibitions be refrained from.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن لَّا يُشْرِكْنَ بِٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ
وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَٰنٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُۥ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ
وَلَا يَعْصِينَكَ فِى مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ ٱللَّهَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

(12) O the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم! Accept the pledge of allegiance from the believing women and seek forgiveness from Allāh on their behalf when they

come to you to pledge that they will not ascribe any partner to Allāh, that they will not steal, that they will not fornicate, that they will not kill their children, that they will not come forth with slander which they fabricate before their hands and legs and that they will not disobey you in any good. Indeed Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE WORDS OF THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ITS CONDITIONS

The Muslims conquered Makkah the year after the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah. When this happened, the polytheists feared that they would have to face the consequences of their transgression against the Muslims. However, with the announcement of *"There shall be no reproach on you today"*, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forgave them all for whatever they had previously done. Apart from a few individuals, all the polytheists accepted Islām. They all then pledged their allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The verbal pledge of allegiance that the women swore is mentioned in the above verse.

Scholars mention that Allāh refers to taking this pledge from women when He instructs in verse 10 that the immigrant women should be examined. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that whenever a woman migrated to Madinah, she was required to swear that she neither migrated because of hatred for her husband, nor because of love for a Muslim man, nor because she was disinclined from any place, nor because she feared being apprehended for any misdeed. She had to swear that she migrated only for the sake of Islām and for the love of Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When she took this oath she was not returned to the disbelievers and the dowry she was paid by her former husband was refunded to him.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that whenever 'Mu'min (*Believer*) women migrated to Madinah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would examine them using the verse *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Accept the pledge of allegiance from believing women...* When these women accepted the terms of the pledge as mentioned in the verse, their examination would be over. When this was done, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would say to them. *"You may go. You have already pledged your allegiance."* Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها says, *"By Allāh! The hand of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never touched the hand of any woman. He accepted only their verbal pledge of allegiance."* [*Muslim v. 2 p. 131*]

Although the words of the pledge seem confined to six prohibitions, the sixth clause (*"that they will not disobey you in any good"* secures an undertaking to practise the entire religion.

The clauses of the pledge are:

Firstly. *"That they will not ascribe any partner to Allāh."*

Secondly. *'That they will not steal."*

Thirdly. *'That they will not fornicate."*

Fourthly. *'That they will not kill their children." 'This clause was especially pertinent during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because*

people used to kill their children fearing that they would be unable to feed them. It was also a common practice to bury infant girls alive, as is discussed in Surah Nahl, Surah Zukhruf and Surah Takwīr . The killing of children also refers to abortion.

Fifthly. *"That they will not come forth with slander which they fabricate before their hands and legs." Commentators have mentioned that this clause may be interpreted in the following two manners:*

That a woman should not claim that a child born to her from another man is her husband's.

She should not take custody of another child and then claim that it is her husbands. This may well happen when a woman's husband is away from the house for a long period of time.

Sixthly. *'That they will not disobey you in any good?" The Arabic word "ma'rūf" (translated above as 'good?') includes all actions that a Muslim ought to carry out, whether the act is Fardh (obligatory), Wajib (Compulsory), Mustahab (preferable) or Nafl (mandatory). It is the demand of one's Belief that one makes an effort to fulfil all such injunctions.*

Sayyidah Umm Atiyya رضی الله عنها says that when the women pledged their allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, he would recite the verse: *"that they will not steal, that they will not fornicate, that they will not..."* In addition to this, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would prevent them from practising "nowha" (wailing and screaming) upon the death of any person. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 871*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates that he once accompanied the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم to the Eidul Fitr Salāh. After performing the Salāh and delivering the Khutba (sermon), The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم passed through the rows of men and came to where the women were. Sayyidina Bilāl رضی الله عنه was with the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم at that time. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then recited the verse: *"O you who believe! When believing women come to you as immigrants then examine them.. (up to the end of the verse)."* The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then asked the women, *"Are you all steadfast on this?"* All but one woman remained silent. She said, *"Yes, we are steadfast on it."* The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then exhorted the women to contribute Sadaqah (*charity*) and Sayyidina Bilāl رضی الله عنه spread out a sheet. The women then began to cast their rings on the sheet. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 133*]

It is evident from certain narration that the men also undertook to observe the same conditions that the women undertook when they pledged their allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم. Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضی الله عنه narrates that a group of prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*رضی الله عنهم were sitting with the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم when he said to them, *"Come pledge your allegiance to me that you will not ascribe any partner to Allāh, that you will not steal, that you will not fornicate, that you will not kill your children, that you will not come forth with slander which you fabricate before your hands and legs and that they will not be disobedient in any good. It is Allāh's responsibility to reward whoever fulfils this. Whoever breaches the pledge and is punished in this world, this will be expiation for him.*

As for the one who breaches and whose sin Allāh conceals in this world,. his matter rests with Allāh. Allāh may forgive him of Allāh wills or Allāh may punish him." Sayyidina Ubādah رضى الله عنه states that they all then pledged their allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the above conditions. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 7*]

Just as the pledge of allegiance was taken from the women, the men were also required to pledge *"That they will not come forth with slander which they fabricate before their hands and legs."* Concerning women, this means:

That a woman should not claim that a child born to her from another man is her husband's.

She should not take custody of another child and then claim that it is her husband's.

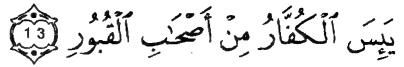
However, since these interpretations cannot apply to men, commentators of Hadith mention that the condition means that a man should not slander another person. The phrase *"before your hands and legs"* is added because most sins stem from these limbs. Other commentators translate the phrase as *"between your hands and legs"* refers to the heart, which lies in this position. The tongue from which the slander is made manifest is merely a spokesman for the sentiments of the heart. [*"Fat'hul Bāri"*]

It is my humble opinion that this interpretation should also be assumed in the right of women and that the situations of a woman labelling another child as her husband's should be regarded as examples of this interpretation. In this manner, one interpretation will fit everyone.

The above narration of Sayyidah Umm Atiyya رضى الله عنها makes it clear that the pledge of allegiance was not confined to only those conditions mentioned in the verse. She mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also took the undertaking from them that they will not practise *"nowha"*. It is learnt that the conditions of the pledge can therefore be amended according to the prevailing circumstances. Therefore, when taking the pledge of allegiance (called Bay'ah), the saints of our times include conditions like *"I will not shave my beard"* so that people abstain from sins that are common in today's times.

Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه narrates that they [the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم] also pledged that they will obey the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم during times of difficulty and ease and when others are being preferred above them. They also pledged that they would never fear the reproach of any person when doing things for Allāh. In addition to this, they undertook to never fight their leaders unless they saw them perpetrate brazen disbelief. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 1045*]

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should seek forgiveness on behalf of the believing women because *'Indeed Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ قَوْمًا غَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ يَئِسُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ كَمَا

(13) O you who believe! Do not befriend a nation with whom Allāh is angry and who have lost hope in the Hereafter just as the disbelievers in the graves have lost hope.

THE COMMAND NOT TO BEFRIEND THE DISBELIEVERS IS REPEATED

Much of the Surah emphasises the prohibition against befriending the disbelievers. The concluding verse of the Surah mentions that Muslims should especially refrain from befriending the Jews. Although all disbelievers have earned Allāh's anger, the *"nation with whom Allāh is angry" is said to refer to the Jews because Allāh has referred to them specifically as "those who have incurred Allāh's wrath"*. Allāh also says about them that *"Humiliation and poverty were stamped on them and they became deserving of Allāh's wrath."* Allāh also says about them, *"So they earned wrath upon wrath."* Another verse states, *"They return with the wrath of Allāh and wretchedness has been laid on them."* Because these verses refer to the Jews, commentators state that Allāh also refers to the Jews in the above verse where He says, *"a nation with whom Allāh is angry."*

Some commentators state that a few poor Muslims used to inform the Jews about the activities of the Muslims for some food as payment. The above verse was revealed to prohibit these Muslims from doing this.

Many commentators state that *"a nation with whom Allāh is angry"* refers to the Jews and the Christians, while a group is also of the opinion that *"a nation with whom Allāh is angry"* refers to the hypocrites. In effect, all disbelievers are referred to by these words and the believers should ensure that they never entertain close relations with any of these people.

Referring to the *"nation with whom Allāh is angry"* Allāh says that they *"have lost hope in the Hereafter just as the disbelievers in the graves have lost hope."* Just as the dead disbelievers are convinced that they cannot attain salvation after death, those who have incurred Allāh's wrath have convinced themselves that Judgement day shall not take place. It is therefore foolish to befriend such people.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" states that *"Those who have been given the scriptures recognise the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *just as they recognise their very own sons."* They therefore knew very well that they were doomed to Hell if they did not follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, their pride and jealousy did not allow them to follow him. In this way, they resigned themselves to their fate and *"have lost hope in (their salvation in) the Hereafter just as the disbelievers in the graves have lost hope."* It is therefore foolish to befriend people who know that they are doomed but who do nothing about it. The prohibition against maintaining close ties of friendship with the disbelievers applies to all disbelievers irrespective of whether they are staunch in their disbelief or not. The verse seems to emphasise severing ties with the Jews probably because they were many in Madinah and because they were exceptionally evil.

سورة الصف

Madinan	Surah As-Saff	Verses 14

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿1﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿2﴾ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿3﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُم بُنْيَٰنٌ مَّرْصُوصٌ ﴿4﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorifies Allāh. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (2) O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? (3) It is indeed a most hateful thing that you say that which you do not do. (4) Verily Allāh loves those who fight in His path in rows as if they are a solid building.

"WHY DO YOU SAY THAT WHICH YOU DO NOT DO?"

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه narrates that a few prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم were sitting together speaking about good deeds when they said that if they knew which deed pleased Allāh most, they would carry it out. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorifies Allāh. He is the Mighty, the Wise. O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?"* [*Tirmidhi, Chapter of Tafsīr*]

'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that Allāh Ta'āla revealed the verse *"Verily Allāh loves those who fight in His path in rows as if they are a solid building"* when the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم said that if they knew what deed was most beloved to Allāh, they would carry out the deed and spend their lives and all their wealth for the same. Shortly after they said this, the Battle of Uhud took place and many of them were found lacking in their resolve. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse *"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?"*

Some commentators state that when the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*

رضى الله عنهم heard about the rewards that the martyrs of Badr received, they said, *"If we are afforded the opportunity to fight in Jihād, we would fight with all our might."* However, when they were forced to flee from the battlefield during the Battle of Uhud, Allāh chided them with the verse: *"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?"*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Ibn Zaid رحمة الله عليه that the verse refers to the hypocrites who promised their assistance to the Muslims but failed to honour their promise.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has reported (*v. 18 p. 78*) that Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه killed a polytheist who used to harass the Muslims to a great extent. However, another person informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that it was he who killed the polytheist. This news greatly pleased the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Awf رضى الله عنه censured Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه for not informing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he had killed the polytheist because this led to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم receiving false information. When Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه clarified the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh revealed the verse: *"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?"*

It is not farfetched to assume that the verse was revealed with reference to all of the above incidents because the meaning of the verse is general and calls on all believers to reflect. Every believer should ponder about whether his words correspond with his deeds or whether he is guilty of betraying his words. One should honour one's promises and pledges. Of course, it is a sin to honour a promise to sin. One should never claim to have done something that one did not do. One should also ensure that one does not betray one's words by preventing others from doing something that one is guilty of.

Allāh adds, *'it is indeed a most hateful thing that you say that which you do not do."* One should make every effort to avoid creating false impressions about oneself because this will incur Allāh's wrath.

THE TERRIBLE PLIGHT OF THOSE LECTURERS WHOSE DEEDS DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH THEIR WORDS

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them when he ascent to the hearers he passed by some people whose lips were being cut with scissors of fire. When he asked Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام who these people were, the reply was that they were those lecturers of his Ummah who used to enjoin others to do good, but forgot (to do good) themselves. According to another narration, he said that they were those lecturers who did not practise what they instructed others to do. [*"Mishkāt" p. 438*]

It is evident that the above verse of the Qur'ān enjoins people to match their deeds with their words when they enjoin others to do good and to refrain from evil. The injunction certainly does not mean that one should not advise others when one is guilty of negligence. Rather, the injunction demands that one continues to preach and practise as well. It is unfortunate that many people who are negligent of their religious practises dwell under the misconception that they cannot preach what they do not practise. They say that they do not want to

oppose the verse of Surah Saff that states: *"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?"*

The Qur'ān does not say that one should neither preach the truth nor practise it. The Qur'ān requires that one practises and preaches the truth simultaneously. One should understand that practising the injunctions of the Shari'ah is a separate command of the Qur'ān and enjoining others to practise the Shari'ah is a separate command altogether. Omitting one of these commands because one has neglected the other is a sin. By doing this, one will be guilty of two sins.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Each of you is a warder and will be questioned regarding his charge."* [*Bukhari Vol 2 p. 783*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Whoever sees an evil should change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, he should do so with his tongue. If he is unable to do so, he should do so with his heart (by regarding the act as an evil). This is the lowest form of Belief." [*Muslim v. 1 p. 51*]

This hadith makes it clear that it is the duty of every person to enjoin good and forbid people from evil.

PRAISE FOR THE MUJĀHIDĪN (*MUSLIM SOLDERS*)

Allāh then praises those who fight in Jihād when He says, *"Verily Allāh loves those who fight in His path in rows as if they are a solid building."* This verse extols the virtue of those Mujāhidīn (*Muslim solders*) who fight in a resolute manner as a united force.

When battles were fought in the past, soldiers of each army formed rows and the battle commenced when the two opposing rows clashed. Occasionally, a soldier would call out, *"Who shall come forward for a challenge?"* someone from the opposite army would then fight him in single combat. In a like manner, two, three of more man-on-man challenges may take place at the beginning. Thereafter, the entire rows of soldiers advance towards each other and engage in combat. This is the actual battle which the verse refers to.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تُؤْذُونَنِى وَقَد تَّعْلَمُونَ أَنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ
إِلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوٓا۟ أَزَاغَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿5﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ
عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا
بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿6﴾

(5) When Mūsa عليه السلام said to his people, "O my people! Why do you harass me when you know that I am Allāh's messenger to you?" However, when they chose to be crooked, Allāh further twisted their hearts. Allāh does not guide a sinful nation. (6) When Isā the son of Maryam said, "O children of Isrā'īl! indeed I am the messenger of Allāh to you, verifying the Torah before me and

giving the glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name will be Ahmad." When he came to them with clear signs, they said, "This is clear magic.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام AND SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام ANNOUNCE THAT THEY ARE MESSENGERS OF ALLĀH

Allāh quotes Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام who said to the Bani Isrā'īl, *"O my people! Why do you harass me when you know that I am Allāh's messenger to you?"* Every messenger of Allāh عليه السلام deserved the greatest respect. However, despite accepting Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام as Allāh's Holy Prophet, the Bani Isrā'īl continuously harassed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Verses 51 to 74 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah 2*), verses 20 to 26 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah 5*) and verse 69 of Surah Ahzāb (*Surah 33*) mention some of the ways in which the Bani Isrā'īl harassed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام tried to convince them that they should desist from this behaviour, but they were not prepared to take heed. Allāh says, *"However, when they chose to be crooked, Allāh further twisted their hearts."* When people have made up their minds not to accept the truth, they will not take heed even though it comes to them time and time again. They will therefore be deprived of guidance because of their stubbornness and opposition to the truth. Allāh concludes the verse by saying, *"Allāh does not guide a sinful nation."* This means that after they have been shown the path to salvation, Allāh will not grant them the ability to tread this path.

Allāh then speaks of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, who said to his people. "O children of Isrā'īl! Indeed I am the messenger of Allāh to you, verifying the Torah before me and giving the glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name will be Ahmad." Despite preaching to them for a long time, only a few Jews responded to the call of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. These followers were called the Hawāriyyin. The rest of the Jews remained antagonistic towards Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and even attempted to assassinate him. However, they were unsuccessful in their attempt because Allāh raised Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام to the heavens. The details of this were discussed in the commentary of verse 157 of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*). However, the Jews did succeed in corrupting the religion of the Christians by making them believe that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh's son. This belief has been discussed in the commentaries of Surah Mā'idah [*Surah 5, verses 72-77*] and Surah Taubah [*Surah 9, verse 30*].

THE CHRISTIANS OPPOSE SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام

It is clear that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was sent only to the Bani Isrā'īl (the Jews). This fact is evident even in the Bible, although the Christians have interpolated it to a great extent. Matthew 105 reads, "These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, *"Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Isra'īl."* Matthew 15:24 quotes that Sayyidina Isā said, *"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Isra'īl."*

The behaviour of the Christians contradict these words of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام whom they profess to follow. Whereas he told them that he was sent exclusively for the Bani Isrā'īl and that they should enter no town other than

those of the Bani Isrā'īl, they are actively propagating their adulterated religion to the entire world. Although the Jews claim to belong to the *"Children of Isrā'īl"* (Bani Isrā'īl), they will not allow the Christians to displace them from their religion. They merely use the Christians to further their political motives while the Christians tire themselves to promote their heretical beliefs to the world, especially to the Muslims. This they do by tempting people with money and food. It is obvious that a true religion should convince people of its truth without the need to tempt them with wealth. Only that religion which cannot prove the truth of its beliefs needs to rely on tempting people to win converts.

SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام FORETELLS THE COMING OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام clearly informed the Bani Isrā'īl that a messenger by the name of Ahmad will come after him. He referred to the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was called by several names. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"I am Muhammad. I am Ahmad. I am Māhi (Obliterator) because Allāh shall use me to obliterate disbelief and shirk. I am Hāshir because people will be raised from their graves after I am raised. I am also Āqib (the last one) because no Holy Prophet shall come after me."* [*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'I am closest to Isā the son of Maryam in this world and in the Ākhirah. All the Prophets (Anbiya) عليهم السلام are like step brothers who have different mothers. They all have the same Religion (belief in Oneness of Allāh, Risālah and Judgment). There is no Holy Prophet between Isā عليه السلام and myself" [*Muslim v. 2 p. 265*]

The Christian monks were well aware of the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام prophesied. In fact, it was one of them who informed Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه about the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This led him to settle in Madinah so that he could await the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The details of his story have been discussed in the commentary of verse 157 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*).

THE COMING OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AS PROPHESIED IN THE TORAH AND BIBLE

The Jews and Christians during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were aware of the prophecies that their divine scriptures contained about the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This was discussed in the commentary of verse 157 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) where Allāh states: *"Those who follow the unlettered messenger and Holy Prophet that they find written with them in the Torah and Injīl."*

The verse of Surah Saff under discussion tells us that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام did indeed inform his followers that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to come after him. However, we shall quote Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام as reported in the Bible. In John 14:15 and John 14:16, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام said to the Jews, *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the father, and He will give you*

another Counselor [i.e. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], to be with you for ever."

John 14: 25 and 14:26 contain the following extract: *"These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counselor [i.e. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

John 16:7 reads, *"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."*

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "PARACLETE'

The above extracts are all verbatim quotations from the Bible. The word *"Counselor"* appearing in each of the three texts is a translation of the word *"Paraclete"* (or *"Periclytos"* in the original Greek manuscripts of the Bible). Although the Christians have used *"Counselor"* and *"Comforter"* to translate the word, the actual translation of the word is "the one whom people praise exceedingly", which is the translation of the Arabic name *'Muhammad"*. When the Hebrew spoken by Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was translated as *"Periclytos"* in early Greek translations of the Bible, the essence of the name Ahmad was still tangible. When the Christians realised that this was a proof for the Muslims, they omitted the word from their translations and replaced it with words like *"Counselor's "Comforter" 'intercessor", "Spirit of truth"* and sometimes even *"Holy Spirit"*.

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام has also prophesied the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in John 16:13 where he said, "When the Spirit of truth [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

Being masters at altering their scriptures, the Jews and Christians have effectively changed the word Periclytos. However, their deception cannot take them very far because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fits the description of Muhammad, Ahmad and Periclytos just as well as he fits the description of *"Counselor"* and *"Comforter"*. On the Day of Judgement, he will also be an *'intercessor"* for the Muslims.

If the Christians say that the prophecy of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام does not fit the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, we may ask them whom it does refer to in that case. If they falsely claim that it refers to someone before the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, we ask them why were their religious scholars awaiting the coming of the *"The Holy Prophet of the end of time"*. Why was it that many Jewish Rabbis (*Jewish Scholar*), Christians monks and Christians kings accept the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as the *"The Holy Prophet of the end of time"* when they heard about him or met him during his time. The incidents of Heraclius the Emperor of Rome, Najāshi the king of Abyssinia and the Christians of Najrān who arrived in Madinah are famous in this regard. In the incident of Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه, the last monk he lived with distinctly told him, *"It is best that you now wait for the 'Holy Prophet of the end of time'. His advent is now imminent."*

We may also ask the Christians why is it that after the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم none of them searched for or awaited the coming of anyone. For further details on the subject one may refer to the book *"Izhārul Haq"* in Arabic by Maulana Rahmatullāh Kirānwi رحمة الله عليه.

FALSE CLAIMANTS TO THE PROPHETHOOD

The prophecy of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام about the coming of a Prophet by the name of Ahmad refers only to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself said, *"I am the seal of all Prophets. There shall be no Holy Prophet after me."* However, there has been a person from India before the partitioning who has claimed that he is a Prophet after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He claims that the above verse of Surah Saff refers to him. Not only is he guilty of disbelief by altering the meaning of this verse, but he is also guilty of rejecting the following verse of Surah Ahzāb where Allāh says, *'Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is not the father of any man among you, but he is Allāh's messenger and the seal of all the Prophets. Allāh has knowledge of all things."* [*Surah 33, verse 40*]

The verse after the prophecy of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام says, *"When he came to them with clear signs, they said, 'This is clear magic.* "' This verse is phrased in the past tense and tells us that the Holy Prophet that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام prophesied had already arrived when the Qur'ān was revealed and that the disbelievers denounced his miracles as *"clear magic"* The world knows that those who claimed to be the Prophets after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were called liars and other names, but none was referred to as a bringer of *"clear magic* ". In fact, none of them could ever show the people a miracle.

The person we have referred to from the Indian subcontinent can therefore not claim to be the one referred to in the above verse because this claim is refuted by the very next sentence where Allāh says, *"When he came to them with clear signs, they said, 'This is clear magic.* "'In addition to this, his name was not even Ahmad. Those who know whom we are referring to will know him. We do not wish to soil our Tafsīr by mentioning his name.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧﴾ يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِـُٔوا۟ نُورَ ٱللَّهِ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَٱللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(7) Who can be more unjust than he who fabricates lies about Allāh when he is being called to Islām? Allāh does not guide the unjust folk. (8) They intend to extinguish Allāh's light with their mouths. However, Allāh shall bring His light to completion even though the disbelievers abhor it. (9) It is He Who sent His messenger with guidance and the true Dīn (religion) to make it dominant over all other religions, even though the idolaters may abhor it.

THE LIGHT OF ALLĀH SHALL CONTINUE TO SHINE EVEN THOUGH THE DISBELIEVERS ABHOR IT

Allāh states, *"Who can be more unjust than he who fabricates lies about Allāh when he is being called to Islām? (There can be none more unjust than he and) Allāh does not guide the unjust folk."*

Allāh then says that those who refuse to accept Islām *"intend to extinguish Allāh 's light with their mouths."* They try whatever they can to destroy Islām. Nevertheless, their efforts are all wasted because Islām will continue to grow from strength to strength because *"Allāh shall bring His light to completion even though the disbelievers abhor it."* Since the coming of Islām. The disbelievers have left no stone unturned to stop its spread. Despite their intense efforts even today, Islām is spreading unabated in their very own countries. Even though they are spending millions of dollars to stem the tide of Islām, they are daily witnessing their own people Turning to Islām.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has narrated from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that once when Wahy (divine revelation) did not come for forty days, the Jew Ka'b bin Ashraf said to his people, *"You have cause to rejoice because Allāh has extinguished the light of Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and it appears as if his religion shall never reach completion."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was naturally hurt by this remark. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verses. Thereafter, Wahy (*revelation*) continued to come to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم unabated.

Allāma (*Scholar*) Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has reported the following five. interpretations of *"Allāh's light"*:

1. *The Qur'ān.*
2. *Islām.*
3. *The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *himself.*
4. *The proofs of Allāh's existence.*
5. *Just as one cannot prevent sunlight from spreading, one cannot stop the Religion of Islām from spreading.*

Allāh continues, *'it is He (Allāh) Who sent His messenger with guidance and the true Religion to make it dominant over all other religions, even though the idolaters may abhor it."* Allāh's decree shall overwhelm all circumstances and will definitely come to pass. Even though the disbelievers do everything possible to stop the spread of Islām, Islām shall dominate over all other religions. One may refer to the commentary of verse 32 of Surah Taubah (*Surah 9*) for more details.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَـٰرَةٍ تُنجِيكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُجَـٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ وَمَسَـٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّـٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ

(10) O you who believe! Should I not show you a trade that will save you from a painful punishment? (11) Believe in Allāh and His messenger and strive in Allāh's path with your wealth and lives. This is best for you if you but knew. (12) Allāh shall forgive your sins and enter you into gardens beneath which rivers flow and into wonderful mansions in eternal paradise. That is the supreme success. (13) Another bounty that you love is help from Allāh and a near victory. Give glad tidings to the believers.

TIDINGS OF A TRADE THAT WILL SAVE ONE FROM A PAINFUL PUNISHMENT

The above verses draw man's attention to the *"trade"* of the Ākhirah. In this world, man needs to earn to provide for his food and lodging. To acquire this wealth, many people resort to trade and commerce. It often occurs that in man's involvement with his trade, he forgets to prepare for his life after death and becomes totally oblivious of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Allāh addresses the believers saying, *"O you who believe! Should I not show you a trade that will save you from a painful punishment?"*

Two aspects are given serious consideration in business. One is that a profit is attained and the other is that a loss is not incurred. It is a commonly accepted notion that averting a loss is better than earning a profit. It is for this reason that Allāh first mentions that the "trade" of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* will save one from *"a painful punishment"*. Thereafter, Allāh mentions the gardens of Heaven and its bounties that one shall receive as profits for carrying out the *"trade"*.

The "trade" that Allāh advises man to involve himself with is to *"Believe in Allāh and His messenger and (to) strive in Allāh's path with your wealth and lives."* Allāh states further that *"This is best for you if you but knew."* As a reward for carrying this out, *"Allāh shall forgive your sins and enter you into gardens beneath which rivers flow and into wonderful mansions in eternal paradise."* The people of Heaven shall live there forever and will never have to leave. Allāh says in Surah Kahf that the people of Heaven *"will abide there (in Heaven) forever and will never want to leave it."* [*Surah 18, verse 108*]

A verse of Surah Fātir states that the people of Heaven will say, *"All praise be to Allāh, Who has removed grief from us. Undoubtedly our Lord is Most Forgiving, Appreciative, Who has settled us in an eternal home by His grace. Here, no difficulty will ever afflict us, nor shall any tiredness touch us."* [*Surah 35, verse 34, 35*]

This verse makes it clear that belief in Allāh, belief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and striving in Allāh's path are the prescription for salvation in the Hereafter. The wealth and riches of this world (which are short-lived) are nothing compared to the everlasting bounties of the Hereafter. The wealth of this world that is acquired wrongfully will even be a source of punishment for a person in the Hereafter. Therefore, a believer should strive for success only in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* because *"That is the supreme success."*

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه quotes that Sayyidina Uthmān bin Madh'ūn

رضى الله عنه once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which trade was most beloved to Allāh so that he could adopt the same. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse: *"O you who believe! Should I not show you a trade that will save you from a painful punishment..."*

Allāh refers to the same trade when He mentions in Surah Taubah, *"So rejoice with your bargain that you have made"* and when He says in Surah Fātir, *"a trade that will never be destroyed."*

Allāh says further, *"Another bounty that you love is help from Allāh and a near victory."* This verse adds that the rewards of this *"trade"* are not confined to the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* but will also be seen in this world. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned that this verse refers to the Muslim conquest of Rome and Persia. Other Scholars mention that refers to the conquest of Makkah.

"Give glad tidings to the believers." The believers are given the tidings of this greatly profitable business and the great profits have already been witnessed time and time again. If today's Muslims carry out the same deeds mentioned, they will also reap the same profits and secure their success in the Hereafter.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوٓا۟ أَنصَارَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْحَوَارِيِّـۧنَ مَنْ أَنصَارِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ ٱلْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنصَارُ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَـَٔامَنَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَكَفَرَت طَّآئِفَةٌ ۖ فَأَيَّدْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ ظَٰهِرِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

(14) O you who believe! Be the helpers of Allāh as Isā the son of Maryam said to the Hawariyyīn (disciples of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام), "Who will help me towards Allāh?" The Hawariyyīn replied, "We shall be Allāh's helpers." So a group of the Bani Isrā'īl believed while a group of them disbelieved. We assisted the believers against their enemies and they became victorious over them.

BECOME ALLĀH'S HELPERS

Jihād was mentioned at the beginning of the Surah and the previous verse also highlighted the virtues of striving in Allāh's path .Allāh concludes the Surah by instructing the believers to assist in propagating Allāh's religion. The opportunities for Jihād, migrating for the sake of Islām or assisting in the propagation of Islām arises in every believer's life. By applying oneself to these demands, one will be able to assist the spread of Islām and become a helper of Allāh's religion. Of course, Allāh is Independent and does not require the assistance of any person. Allāh refers to people as *"Allāh's helpers"* when they assist in the propagation of Islām to express their high rank.

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was the Holy Prophet who lived closest to the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. There were many people during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who were well aware of the teachings of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, especially the Christian monks. Therefore, Allāh quotes an incident in the life of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Although most of the Bani Isrā'īl rejected Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, he had a few disciples who were called the Hawariyyīn

(*Disciples*). They actively engaged in spreading the religion of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام in various regions.

Allāh addresses the believers saying, *"O you who believe! Be the helpers of (the Religion of) Allāh as Isā the son of Maryam said to the Hawariyyīn (Disciples)," Who will help me towards (spreading the Religion of) Allāh?"* The Hawariyyīn *(Disciples)* replied, *"We shall be Allāh's helpers."'* Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه mentions that after the Hawariyyīn *(Disciples)* pledged to assist in the propagation of Sayyidina Isā's عليه السلام Religion, he dispatched them to the various areas of Shām (*Syria*).

The commentary of verses 52 and 53 of Surah Āl Imrān (*Surah 3*) discussed who the Hawariyyīn *(Disciples)* were and why they were called by this name. Allāh then says, *"So a group of the Bani Isrā'īl believed while a group of them disbelieved."*

THE THREE GROUPS AMONG THOSE WHO CLAIM TO FOLLOW SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 4 p. 339*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that after Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was raised to the heavens, his followers began to differ among themselves. A group claimed that he was Allāh Himself who had come to the world. Another group claimed that he was Allāh's son while a third group claimed that he was Allāh's Prophet whom Allāh had raised to the heaven. When the groups clashed, the two disbeliever groups (the first and second groups) overpowered the group of believers (the third group). When Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to the world, the group of believers became dominant. This is referred to in the verse *"We assisted the believers against their enemies and they became victorious over them."* This group then dominated the others by way of their superior belief that was confirmed by the Qur'ān.

This victory of the believers followers of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام does not refer to a physical victory after a battle because the books of history make no mention of such a battle. It is for this reason that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the victory was in respect of strength' of beliefs. This group then accepted Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and had the Qur'ān to substantiate their beliefs and to disprove the beliefs of the other two groups.

The above interpretation applies to the time of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. However, the history of latter centuries proved that Allāh assisted the believers against the Christians in the physical battles referred to as the Crusades.

سورة الجمعة

Madinan	Surah Al-Jumuah	Verses 11

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ (1) هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ (2) وَآخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (3) ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ (4)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorify Allāh the Sovereign, the Most Pure, the Mighty, the Wise. (2) It is He Who sent among the unlettered nation a Holy Prophet from themselves who recites His verses to them, purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom. Without doubt, they were in clear deviation before this. (3) (Allāh also sent the Prophet to) other people from them whom they have not yet met. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (4) This is Allāh's grace which He grants to whoever He pleases. Allāh is the Possessor of immense grace.

ALLĀH HAS SENT HIS HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم TO TEACH PEOPLE AND TO PURIFY THEM SPIRITUALLY

Allāh begins Surah Jumu'ah by saying, *"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorify Allāh."* Allāh then enumerates His attributes when He says that He is *"the Sovereign, the Most Pure"*. The interpretation of *"Al Malik"* and *"Al Quddūs"* was explained in the commentary of verse 23 of Surah Hashr (*Surah 59*). Allāh then states that He is also *"Al Azīz"* (*"the Mighty"*) and *"Al Hakīm"* (*"the Wise"*). These two attributes are repeated in various verses of the Qur'ān. While *"Al Azīz"* means that Allāh is Most Mighty, it also means that Allāh is the One Who possesses all true honour and respect. Mention of these attributes reminds man that Allāh has the might to apprehend any sinner and none can escape from Him. In addition to this, everything He does is full of wisdom. Everything He instructs man to do must be dutifully carried out because there is

wisdom in every act that He commands. Nothing that He commands is futile.

Allāh then reminds mankind of an extremely great favour that He has bestowed on them. The favour is expressed in the verse where Allāh says, *"It is He Who sent among the unlettered nation (the Arabs) a Prophet from themselves who recites His verses to them, purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom."* Allāh refers to the Arabs as an *"unlettered nation"* because most of them were illiterate. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"We (Arabs) are an unlettered nation. We can neither write nor count."* The Ho'y Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was himself unlettered, as Allāh mentions in verses 157 and 158 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*). Allāh says in verse *158* of Surah A'rāf, *"So believe in Allāh and His messenger, the unlettered Prophet."*

Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"Before this you were unable to recite any book, neither could you write with your right hand. Otherwise (i.e. if you were literate), the people of falsehood would be cast into doubt (thinking that you wrote the Qur'ān)."* [*Surah 29, verse 48*]

Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was untutored.., millions of literate people would sacrifice their lives for him. He brought to mankind a book (the Qur'ān) of such eloquence that even the most learned linguists are unable to match. Allāh made the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the guide and mercy for mankind. All of mankind are expected to follow in his footsteps and are forced to surrender to his superior knowledge.

Allāh describes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم using the following descriptions:

First. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a messenger *'from themselves"* *i.e.* from among the Arabs.

Second. He "recites His (Allāh's) verses to them."

Third. He *"purifies them"* spiritually. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم purified people's souls from all types of evil qualities.

Fourth. He *"teaches them the Book and wisdom."* Commentators mention that *"the Book"* refers to the Qur'ān and *"wisdom"* refers to the understanding of the Qur'ān. Teaching *"wisdom"* also refers to teaching people the words of the Qur'ān, the meanings of the words and the interpretations of the verses. Refer to the commentary of verse 129 of Surah Baqarah for further details.

Allāh states further, *"Without doubt, they (the Arabs) were in clear deviation before this."* This means that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent among the Arabs they were immersed in sin. They worshipped idols, engaged in murder, infanticide and all other types of sins. Their reformation began with the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent as a Holy Prophet to the entire universe, his coming spread the light of guidance throughout the globe.

THE SERVICE THAT NON-ARABS RENDERED TO ISLĀM

When the message of Islām transcended beyond the Arabian peninsula, non-Arabs accepted the Qur'ān and Ahadīth, memorised them, mastered the

interpretations and even began writing books on Tafsīr and laws of the Qur'ān. They took the message to others and there was an extremely large number of Scholars and pious people among them. Their services to Islām have been truly tremendous.

Allāh refers to the non-Arabs when He says, *"(Allāh also sent the Holy Prophet to) other people from them whom they (the Arabs) have not yet met. He is the Mighty, the Wise."* When this verse was revealed, the message of Islām had not yet spread out of Arabia. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that when this verse of Surah Jumu'ah was revealed, the companions of prophets *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who the people were *"whom they have not yet met"*. When the question was repeated thrice, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم placed his hand on Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه, who was of Persian origin. This denoted that he was among the people whom the Arabs had not yet met with the message of Islām. Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"If belief was by the Thurayya (Pleiades) constellation of stars, there would be people from among them (the Persians) who would acquire it there."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 727*]

It was by way of example that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that there will be people from among the Persians who would acquire belief even if it were by the Thurayya (Pleiades) constellation of stars. This would also refer to all other non-Arab nations besides the Persians. When the Persians began to neglect the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and succumbed to Shia beliefs, Allāh chose other nations to serve Islām, all of whom have also rendered sterling service to the Religion.

"This (Belief) is Allāh's grace which He grants to whoever He pleases. Allāh is the Possessor of immense grace." Allāh grants the wealth of Belief to whomever He pleases. Every person blessed with belief should be grateful to Allāh, especially those who have the honour to serve Allāh's religion.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَاةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا ۚ بِئْسَ مَثَلُ
الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿5﴾ قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
هَادُوا إِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ
﴿6﴾ وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿7﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ
الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿8﴾

(5) The analogy of those who were charged with bearing the Torah and then failed to bear it, is like that of a donkey carrying books. Vile is the analogy of the people who falsify Allāh's verses. Allāh does not guide the unjust nation. (6) Say, "O Jews! If you think that you are Allāh 's friends and others are not, then wish for death if you are truthful." (7) They shall never wish for death because

of the deeds that their hands send forth. Allāh does not guide the unjust nation. (8) Say, "Verily the death that you flee from shall certainly find you. Thereafter you shall be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen and He will inform you of what you used to do."

AN ANALOGY OF THE JEWS WHO ARE TOLD THAT IT IS FUTILE TO FLEE FROM DEATH

The above verses speak about the sorry religious position of the Jews and the terrible plight they are destined to suffer in both worlds. The Jews are the descendants of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, whose title was Isrā'īl. It is for this reason that they are referred to as the Bani Isrā'īl (the children of Isrā'īl). Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام were two of the more famous Prophet عليه السلام whom Allāh sent among the Bani Isrā'īl. Allāh Ta'āla gave Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام the Torah which contained detailed laws for the Bani Isrā'īl. Many of them did learn the Torah and practised its injunctions. Referring to them in Surah Mā'idah, Allāh says, *"The Prophets* عليهم السلام*, who were subservient to Allāh, judged the Jews with it (the Torah); and those of Allāh and the scholars (also judged with it) because they were instructed to preserve Allāh's Book and they were witnesses to it."* [*Surah 5, verse 44*]

Initially the Jewish scholars practised the Torah and enjoined people to do the same. However, they soon began to neglect the injunctions of the Torah and even started making changes in the Torah. When they began to do this, they no longer remained worthy bearers of the Torah. Drawing an analogy of these people Allāh states, *"The analogy of those who were charged with bearing the Torah (i.e. with fulfilling its commands) and then failed to bear it (i.e. failed to practise), is like that of a donkey carrying books. Vile is the analogy of the people who falsify Allāh's verses. Allāh does not guide the unjust nation."*

THE EVIL OF THE JEWS AND THEIR GOOD OPINION OF THEMSELVES

Although the Jews had the Torah with them, they perpetrated the villainy of assassinating many Prophets عليهم السلام. Besides rejecting the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they even attempted to assassinate him. This they did even though they realised that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the final Prophet described in their scriptures.

Despite their evil behaviour, the Jews maintained that only they were Allāh' s friends and that none other enjoyed this privilege. In Surah Mā'idah Allāh quotes that they said, *"We are the children of Allāh and His loved ones!"* [*Surah 5, verse 18*]

In addition to this they also used to say that the bounties of the Hereafter are reserved exclusively for them. In reply, Allāh tells them in verse 94 of Surah Baqarah *"If the home of the Hereafter is reserved exclusively for you and none else, then wish for death if you are truthful."*

Here in Surah Jumu'ah, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Say, 'O Jews! If you think that you are Allāh's friends and others are not, then wish for death if you are truthful."*

This verse tells them that if they are convinced that only they are Allāh's friends, why are they labouring in this world? It is then best for them to leave this world and proceed to Heaven where they will have no difficulties at all. Since death is the gateway to the Hereafter, they ought to have a speedy death so that they may reach the Hereafter more quickly. If they say that death is not in their control, then they should at least wish for death. However, *"They shall never wish for death because of the deeds that their hands send forth. Allāh does not guide the unjust nation."*

This verse makes it clear that their claim to be Allāh's friends is false and that they fear punishment for the disbelief and other sins that they carry out. Allāh says about the Jews in Surah Baqarah, *"You will find them to be the most greedy of all people for life; even more than the idolaters. Each of them wishes that he is granted a life of a thousand years. Even the fact that he is granted this life would not save him from punishment."* The Jews know that they will have to face punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* for their sins and therefore wish that they can live for as long as possible.

One may ask that a Muslim will also refuse to wish for death if anyone were to ask him to do so. Therefore, how can wishing for death be a criterion for truth and falsehood? In reply to this, it should first be understood that the Jews were asked to wish for death because they claimed that they were the beloved friends of Allāh and that only they would enter Heaven. Instead of giving them a detailed theoretical reply, they are told to wish for death so that they realise the error of their claim in an instant.

As for a Muslim, his dislike for death is a natural feeling. More than this, the Ahadīth have prohibited Muslims from wishing for death because it is best for a Muslim to continue living. If he is a good person, staying alive is best for him because he then has the opportunity to carry out more good deeds and to improve his position in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. On the other hand, if he is a sinful person, remaining alive will afford him a greater opportunity to repent and amend his ways. However, if a person is adamant to remain as a disbeliever, thinking that he has the exclusive right to enter Heaven. He will be addressed as the Jews are addressed in the foregoing verses of the Qur'ān.

It should be borne in mind that some Jews held the opinion that they would enter Hell, albeit for a short period. They would say, *"The Fire will touch us only for a limited number of days."* The verses under discussion do not apply to such Jews, but only to those who believed that they would enter Heaven immediately after dying. In the commentary of verses 94 to 96 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah 2*) it was narrated from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه that the Jews declined when they were challenged to Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation for each other*) i.e. where two opposing parties pray for the death of the one whose claim is false.

Allāh addresses the Jews further when He says, *"Verily the death that you flee from shall certainly find you."* The death of every person has been predetermined and none can escape this appointment. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Wherever you may be, death will find you even though you be in lofty towers."* [*Surah 4, verse 78*]

Those who die as disbelievers are destined for Hell irrespective of how long

they live. Despite knowing this, *"Each of them* (the Jews) *wishes that he is granted a life of a thousand years.* (However) *Even the fact that he is granted this life* (of a thousand years) *would not save him from punishment."*

Every person shall die and will have to face the consequences of his deeds in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Allāh further tells the Jews that after death, *"you shall be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen and He will inform you of what you used to do."* Knowing that the punishment for disbelief is eternal damnation to Hell, any sensible person would realise that he should believe in Allāh and His Prophets عليهم السلام. None should labour under the misconception that his sins pass unnoticed and that he will not have to account for them. Allāh has perfect knowledge of the seen and the unseen and will reward or punish people accordingly.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا نُودِىَ لِلصَّلَوٰةِ مِن يَوْمِ ٱلْجُمُعَةِ فَٱسْعَوْاْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَذَرُواْ ٱلْبَيْعَ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُواْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱبْتَغُواْ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱذْكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

(9) O you who believe! When the Adhān is called out for Salāh on the day of Jumu'ah, then hasten towards Allāh 's remembrance and leave trading. This is best for you if you but knew. (10) When the Salāh has been completed then disperse in the land, seek from Allāh's bounty and remember Allāh abundantly so that you may be successful.

THE INJUNCTION TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY FOR THE JUMU'AH SALĀH WHEN THE ADHĀN IS CALLED OUT

These verses express the obligatory (*Fardh*) nature of the Jumu'ah *(Friday)* Salāh. Allāh Ta'āla says, *"O you who believe! When the Adhān is called out for Salāh on the day of Jumu'ah, then hasten towards Allāh's remembrance and leave trading."* The first Khutbah (sermon) is referred to as "Allāh's remembrance". This verse commands Muslims not to delay in presenting themselves for the Jumu'ah Salāh once the Adhān has been called.

One's occupation should not deter one from responding to the call of the Adhān (*the call of the prayer*). The command to *"leave trading"* is merely an example of an occupation that could prevent one from presenting oneself for the Jumu'ah Salāh. People tend to hesitate to do something when it means that they have to forfeit any worldly gain. They will therefore not want to close their businesses for the Jumu'ah Salāh. It is for this reason that Allāh makes it clear that *"This is best for you if you but knew."*

During the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم only one Adhān was called out for the Jumu'ah Salāh. This was called out after the Imām had already alighted the Mimbar (pulpit). During those times people would be present in the

Masjid before the Adhān. They may have been only a few who arrived after hearing the Adhān. This was the state of affairs during the Caliph of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه as well. When Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه became the Khalifa (*Caliphs*), the number of Muslims had grown considerably. He therefore initiated another Adhān that was called out in the trading area further from the Masjid in a place called *"Zowrā"* It was from this time that the first Adhān was called out. Scholars state that a person should hasten to the Masjid from the time that this first Adhān is called out. The Ummah accepts this act of Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه because he was among the *"Khulafa Rāshidīn"(The Righteous Caliphs)* and the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم explicitly mentioned, "You should steadfastly hold on to the my practices and the practices of the rightly guided Khulafa Rāshidīn (*righteous caliphs*)."

THE VIRTUES OF THE JUMU'AH SALĀH

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The angels stand at the doors of the Masjid on the day of Jumu 'ah. They record the name of the person who arrives first (for the Jumu 'ah Salāh), thereafter the name of the person who arrives second. In this manner, they record each person 's name as he arrives in the Masjid. The person who leaves for the Jumu 'ah Salāh as soon as the afternoon arrives shall receive the reward of sacrificing a camel. The one who arrives after him shall have the reward of sacrificing a cow. The next person shall receive the reward of sacrificing a sheep, the next of sacrificing a fowl and the next of giving an egg in charity. Once the Imām comes out to ascend the Mimbar (pulpit), the angels fold up their records and listen to the Khutbah." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 121, 127 and Muslim v. 1 p. 282*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person who performs wudhu and performs it properly, proceeds to the Masjid for the Jumu 'ah Salāh, listens attentively to the Khutbah and remains silent, then his sins will be forgiven from that Jumu 'ah until the next Jumu'ah and a further three days in addition. This is because every good deed is rewarded a minimum of ten fold. The one who touches (plays with) pebbles (or anything else) has engaged in futility (i.e. he has forfeited his rewards because his act betrays lack of concern for the Khutbah)." [*Muslim v. 1 p. 283*]

Whereas the above narration mentions performing wudhu (*ablution*), other Ahadīth encourage performing Ghusl (taking a bath), applying oil to the hair, applying Itr (perfume), brushing the teeth with a Miswāk, wearing the best clothes, walking to the Masjid and sitting as close as possible to the Imām. [*"Mishkāt" p. 122, 123*]

While listening to the Khutbah (*Sermon*), one is not permitted to even indicate to another person to stop talking because this will disturb one's concentration. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"If you tell someone who is talking to be silent, you have perpetrated an act of futility."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 127*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The best day is the day of Jumu 'ah. Sayyidina Ādam علیه السلام was created on this day, he was entered into Heaven on this day and taken out of Heaven on this day. Judgement day shall take place on the day of Jumu'ah." [*Muslim v. 1 p. 282*]

THE WARNING AGAINST NEGLECTING THE JUMU'AH SALĀH

It is not compulsory for a sick person, a Musāfir (*traveller*), a woman and a slave to present themselves for the Jumu'ah Salāh. The mature male who is not suffering from an illness that prevents him from performing Salāh has to leave his occupation and present himself in the Masjid for the Jumu'ah Salāh in a suitable manner.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once stood on the Mimbar (*pulpit*) and said, *"People should refrain from neglecting the Jumu'ah Salāh otherwise Allāh shall seal their hearts and they will be included among the neglectful ones."* [*Muslim v. 1 p. 284*]

Sayyidina Abu Ja'd Dhamari رضى الله عنه narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh will set a seal on the heart of the person who neglected three Jumu'ah Salāhs out of laziness." [*"Mishkāt" p. 121*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he truly intended to appoint someone else to lead the Salāh while he personally set fire to the homes of those who neglected the Jumu'ah Salāh. [*""Mishkāt"" p. 121*]

THE MOMENT WHEN SUPPLICATION ARE ACCEPTED

There is a moment during the day of Jumu'ah when supplication are accepted. It has been mentioned that this moment is from the time that the Imām sits on the Mimbar (pulpit) until the Jumu'ah Salāh is complete. [*Muslim v. 1 p. 281*]

It is also reported that one should search for this time between the Asr Salāh and sunset. [*Tirmidhi v. 1 p. 111*]

THE VIRTUE OF RECITING SURAH KAHF ON FRIDAYS

Reciting the first three verses of Surah Kahf on a Friday will protect one from the evil of Dajjāl. [*Tirmidhi v. 2 p. 116*]

Other Ahadīth state this virtue for reciting the concluding verses of Surah Kahf on a Friday. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the person who recites Surah Kahf on a Friday shall have light until the following Friday. This means that his grave will be illuminated for this period so that he will have light in his grave if he dies during this time. It may also mean that his heart will be illuminated until the following Friday. [*Bayhaqi in "Da'wātul Kabīr"*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also enjoined that Surah Hūd be recited every Friday. [*Daarmi p. 326*]

RECITING DURŪD SHARĪF (*BENEDICTION*) ON A FRIDAY

Although the recitation of Durūd Sharīf is extremely important at all times, the Shari'ah emphasises that Muslims increase their recitation of Durūd (*Benediction*) on Fridays. [*"Mishkāt" p. 120*]

DISPERSING IN THE LAND AND SEEKING ALLĀH'S BOUNTY AFTER THE JUMU'AH SALĀH

Allāh states, *"When the Salāh has been completed, then spread out in the land, seek*

from Allāh's bounty... "This verse does not make the act of dispersing and seeking Allāh's bounty compulsory. The verse only makes it clear that this act is totally permissible. The verse tells us that after the Jumu'ah Salāh is over, the Muslims have fulfilled their obligation and can proceed to engage in their worldly occupations to seek their sustenance. Muslims may now continue with the work they had left to attend the Jumu'ah Salāh. Because the verse does make seeking one's livelihood compulsory after the Jumu'ah Salāh, one will be commended for remaining in the Masjid up to Asr or Maghrib and engaging in acts of Ibādah (*worship*).

After declaring the permissibility of engaging in one's occupation after the Jumu'ah Salāh, Allāh instructs the Muslims to *"remember Allāh abundantly so that"* they *"may be successful."* This phrase reminds Muslims that their actions should not be devoid of Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*. A believer should be constantly engaged in Allāh's Dhikr (remembrance). In fact, Salāh is also a form of remembering Allāh as Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"establish Salāh for My remembrance."*

Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"Without doubt, the remembrance of Allāh is greatest."* Allāh states in Surah Ahzāb, *"O you who believe! Remember Allāh in abundance and glorify Him morning and evening."*

Allāh says that a believer should engage in Allāh's remembrance (*Dhikr*) so that he *"may be successful"*. Remembrance of Allāh is such a great thing that it ensures one's success in both worlds. One's heart attains contentment and tranquillity with remembrance *(Dhikr)*. Remembrance Allāh *(Dhikr)* has been emphasised at this juncture because people are negligent of Allāh when they are busy in shopping centres and marketplaces. While in the marketplaces, we should recite the following remembrance *(Dhikr)*:

{***TRANSLATION:*** *"There is none worthy of worship besides the One Allāh Who has no partner. All Kingdom and praises belong to Him only. He gives life and death and is the Living Who shall never die. All good is in his control and He has power over everything."*}

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the person who recites the above remembrance *(Dhikr)* in the marketplace shall have a million good deeds recorded to his account. In addition to this, a million of his sins will be forgiven, his rank will be elevated a million stages and a mansion will be built for him in Heaven. [*Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah*]

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَـٰرَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا ٱنفَضُّوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَآئِمًا ۚ قُلْ مَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ ٱلتِّجَـٰرَةِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

(11) When they see trade or futility, they hurry to it and leave you standing. Say, "That which is with Allāh is better than futility and trade. Allāh is the Best of providers."

REBUKING THOSE WHO LEFT THE KHUTBAH (*SERMON*) TO GATHER AROUND A TRADE CARAVAN

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم were performing the Jumu'ah Salāh with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم one Friday when a trade caravan of camels suddenly appeared in Madinah. The caravan was laden with food and drink. When the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم heard the arrival of the caravan being announced in the marketplace, many of them left the Masjid to gather around the caravan. Eventually, there were only twelve prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم left with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Masjid. It was on that occasion that Allāh revealed the verse, *"When they see trade or futility, they hurry to it and leave you standing. Say, 'That which is with Allāh is better than futility and trade. Allāh is the Best of providers.* "' [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 128, v. 2 p. 727*]

A narration of Muslim (*v. 1 p. 284*) reports that the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم were listening to the Khutbah (sermon) being delivered by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when the caravan appeared in Madinah. Because the Khutbah (*Sermon*) assumes the status of the Salāh and is regarded as part of the Salāh, some narrators have mentioned that the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم were performing Salāh instead of saying that they were listening to the Khutbah (*Sermon*). The narration of Muslim reports that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه were among the twelve prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم who remained behind in the Masjid.

The *"Marāsīl"* of Imām Abu Dawūd رحمة الله عليه (p. 7) reports that initially the Jumu'ah Salāh used to be recited like the Eid Salāh i.e. with the Salāh first and the Khutbah (*sermon*) second. It once occurred that the Salāh was over and the Khutbah (*sermon*) was in progress when a trade caravan arrived in Madinah. A person came into the Masjid announcing that the trade caravan of Dihya bin Khalīfa had arrived (Dihya was then not yet a Muslim). When the caravan arrived in Madinah, Dihya bin Khalīfa's family welcomed the caravan by beating drums. Thinking that there was no harm in leaving the Khutbah (*sermon*), some prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم left to meet the caravan. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"When they see trade or futility, they hurry to it and leave you standing. Say, 'That which is with Allāh is better than futility and trade. Allāh is the Best of providers.* "' Thereafter, the Khutbah (*sermon*) was delivered before the Salāh.

It appears from this narration of the *'Marāsīl"* that the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم who left the Masjid thought that the Khutbah (*sermon*) was not part of the Salāh and that they were at liberty to leave as soon as the Salāh was over. They therefore committed an error in judgement, for which Allāh chided them when He says, *"When they see trade or futility, they hurry to it and leave you standing."* *'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports that "futility" refers to the beating of the drums.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" also reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم how many of them were left in the Masjid. When they informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم twelve men and one

woman stayed behind, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to them that if they had not remained behind with him, stones from the sky would have rained on the people. Another narration reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed them that had they all had left the Masjid, the entire valley would have been flowing with fire.. ['Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 345, 346]

There was a shortage of food in Madinah during that time and food prices were very high. Therefore, the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم hurried to the caravan because they feared that they would get nothing from the caravan if they did not hurry and if they had to wait until after the Khutbah (*sermon*). Thinking that there was no harm in leaving before the Khutbah (*sermon*) ended and fearing that the Jews and hypocrites would get most of the merchandise, the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم hurried to meet the caravan without waiting for the Khutbah (*sermon*) to end. With this in mind, one can understand why the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم acted like they did. However, an error is an error and cannot be justified.

Allāh says, *"Say, 'That which is with Allāh is better than futility and trade..'"* This verse tells us that listening to the Khutbah (*sermon*) and performing the Jumu'ah Salāh attracts ample blessings in one's provision from Allāh. This is much better than the commodities of this world which one may acquire by forsaking the Khutbah (*sermon*) and Salāh. It is therefore necessary for the believer to focus his attention on Allāh at all times and to fulfil Allāh's commands.

"Allāh is the Best of providers." Allāh has created all forms of sustenance and He has also created the means to acquire these forms of sustenance. Everything that one receives is because Allāh wills it so. Even if a person gives something to another person, it is because Allāh has placed the inspiration within his heart to do so.

Ruling : The Khutbah (*sermon*) of the Jumu'ah Salāh is a condition for the validity of the Salāh. It is therefore imperative that the Khutbah (*sermon*) precedes the Salāh. If two Rakāhs of Salāh are performed on a Friday afternoon without the Khutbah (*sermon*), it will not be regarded as the Jumu'ah Salāh.

Ruling : It was the practice of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to recite Surah Jumu'ah (*Surah 62*) in the first Rakāh of the Jumu'ah Salāh and Surah Munāfiqūn (*Surah 63*) in the second Rakāh. [*Muslim v. 1 p. 2871*]

It has also been reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite Surah A'lā (*Surah 87*) in the first Rakāh and Surah Ghāshiya (*Surah 88*) in the second Rakāh of both the Eid and Jumu'ah Salāhs. Whenever the Eid and Jumu'ah Salāhs occurred on the same day, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite Surah A'lā and Surah Ghāshiya in both these Salāhs. [*Muslim v. 1 p. 288*]

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سورة المنٰـــفقون

Madinan	Surah Al-Munāfiqūn	Verses 11

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ قَالُوا۟ نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَكَٰذِبُونَ (1) ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ (2) ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا۟ فَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ (3) وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَقُولُوا۟ تَسْمَعْ لِقَوْلِهِمْ ۖ كَأَنَّهُمْ خُشُبٌ مُّسَنَّدَةٌ ۖ يَحْسَبُونَ كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ هُمُ ٱلْعَدُوُّ فَٱحْذَرْهُمْ ۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ (4) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ لَوَّوْا۟ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُم مُّسْتَكْبِرُونَ (5) سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ لَن يَغْفِرَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ (6) هُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنفِقُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَنْ عِندَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ حَتَّىٰ يَنفَضُّوا۟ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَآئِنُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ (7) يَقُولُونَ لَئِن رَّجَعْنَآ إِلَى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ لَيُخْرِجَنَّ ٱلْأَعَزُّ مِنْهَا ٱلْأَذَلَّ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (8)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) When the hypocrites come to you they say, "We testify that you are certainly Allāh's messenger." Allāh knows well that you are His messenger and Allāh testifies that the hypocrites are liars. (2) They use their oaths as shields and prevent (others) from Allāh's path. Evil indeed is that which they do. (3) This is because they believed and then they disbelieved, so their hearts were sealed and they do not understand. (4) When you look at them, their physical appearance appeals to you and when they speak, you listen attentively to what they have to

say. They are like sticks leaning against a support. They think that every shout is against them. They are enemies so beware of them. May Allāh destroy them! Whence are they wandering astray? (5) When they are told, "Come forward and Allāh's messenger will seek forgiveness for you," they turn their heads around and you see them arrogantly turning away. (6) It is the same to them whether you seek forgiveness for them or whether you do not seek forgiveness for them. Allāh shall never forgive them. Verily Allāh does not guide the sinful nation. (7) They are the ones who say, "Do not spend on those with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم until they disperse." To Allāh belongs the treasures of the heavens and the earth but the hypocrites do not understand. (8) They say, "If we return to Madinah, the honourable ones among us shall certainly exile the humiliated ones." All honour belongs to Allāh, His messenger and the believers but the hypocrites do not know it.

THE MISCHIEF OF THE MUNĀFIQĪN (*HYPOCRITES*)

Surah Munāfiqūn speaks about the evil words and false oaths of the hypocrites. The hypocrites were those people who outwardly professed to be Muslims but were disbelievers by heart. They reluctantly performed Salāh with the Muslims and even participated in Jihād (*Islamic war*). However, they did not desist from speaking ill of the Muslims and of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Ahadīth commentators state that the Muslims were once on a Jihād (*Islamic war*) expedition against the Banu Mustaliq tribe when one of the Immigrants slapped one of the Ansār. The Ansāri rallied support from his fellow Ansār and the Immigrants supported the Muhājir (*immigrant*). Upon hearing the noise, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"What are these cries of ignorance?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said this because all were one after accepting Islām and it is most unbecoming for Muslims to rally support among their tribes against fellow Muslims. When the companion of prophet *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the situation, he said, *"Leave this cry of ignorance because it has a horrible smell."*

When Abdullāh bin Ubay the leader of the hypocrites heard about this, he said to the others, "Now the Muhājirīn (*immigrants*) have started to hit the Ansār (*inhabitants*). They came from outside and we gave them food and drink and now they have become bold. This is certainly a case of biting the hand that feeds one. Do not spend on them so that they may disperse. When they have nothing to eat, they will leave by themselves." He also said, *"If we return to Madinah, the honourable ones among us (the Ansār) shall certainly exile the humiliated ones (the Immigrants)."*

This incident is narrated in Bukhari (*p. 28, 29*) by Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه. When Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he summoned the hypocrites and asked them whether they had made the statements. Abdullāh bin Ubay took solemn oaths before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stating that he had never mentioned anything of the sort. The other hypocrites also swore similar oaths and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم believed them. When this happened, Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه felt extremely grieved because it made him look a liar. He therefore stayed indoors and refused to come out.

When Allāh revealed Surah Munāfiqūn up to the verse *"the honourable ones among us shall certainly exile the humiliated ones,"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه and said to him, *"Allāh has confirmed what you said."* On occasions like this, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was rarely able to control himself. As he had said earlier concerning Sayyidina Hātib bin Abi Balta'a رضى الله عنه, he repeated on this occasion when he said, "O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Permit me to behead this hypocrite (i.e. Abdullāh bin Ubay)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Leave him. If you kill him, people will say that Allāh 's messenger kills his own companions."

THE BELIEF OF THE SON OF THE HYPOCRITE LEADER

Tirmidhi reports that when the son of Abdullāh bin Ubay heard that his father had said, *"the honourable ones among us shall certainly exile the humiliated ones"*, he refused to allow his father into Madinah until his father admitted that he was humiliated and that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was honourable. When he admitted this, he was allowed to enter Madinah. The son's name was also Abdullāh. We shall now review the Surah from the beginning.

Allāh states, *"When the hypocrites come to you they say, 'We testify that you are certainly Allāh's messenger. Allāh knows well that you are His messenger and Allāh testifies that the hypocrites are liars."* The hypocrites lied when they said that they had accepted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's true messenger. An oath is taken to confirm that what a person says coincides with what is within his heart. The oath of the hypocrites would have therefore meant that they truly accepted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's messenger. However, their oaths were blatant lies. Truthful people seldom have to take oaths because people know them to be truthful. However, the hypocrites repeatedly took oaths because they were not truthful.

Allāh mentions, *"Allāh knows well that you are His messenger"* to emphasise that the testimony of the hypocrites was not needed because Allāh has already confirmed the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's messenger.

"They use their oaths as shields..." The hypocrites took oaths merely so that the Muslims may regard them as Muslims and so that their wealth, families and properties may remain safe among the Muslims. They feared that if their disbelief was exposed, they would suffer the fate of the other disbelievers. Therefore, because their oaths seemed to protect them by confirming their Belief, these oaths are referred to as shields.

Allāh says further that the hypocrites *"prevent (others) from Allāh's path."* Besides refusing to accept Islām, they even prevent their children and associates from accepting. Although the hypocrites think that they are doing well for themselves by benefiting from the Muslims and the disbelievers, *"Evil indeed is that which they do."* Their behaviour is indeed evil because it will subject them to the everlasting punishment of Hell.

"This (evil behaviour of theirs) is because they believed (superficially at first) and then they disbelieved..." i.e. then their disbelief was exposed when they made certain statements. Once their façade was exposed to all, *"their hearts were sealed and they do not understand."* They were thereafter unable to perceive the truth.

THE TALKS OF THE HYPOCRITES ARE VERY IMPRESSIVE

Further describing the hypocrites, Allāh says, *"When you look at them, their physical appearance appeal to you and when they speak, you listen attentively to what they have to say."* The hypocrites were handsome men with good physique. Their talks were also very impressive and captivating. However, *"They are like sticks leaning against a support."* Just as these sticks may seem long and strong, they are lifeless and cannot even stand by themselves. Similarly, the hypocrites had strong bodies that were devoid of belief and courage. They are of no use to the Muslims.

The author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* interprets the verse to mean that the hypocrites are not like fruit-bearing trees that are of benefit to people. They are rather like sticks leaning against something. Instead of giving benefit, they only derive benefit from others, much like parasites.

Allāh then describes the cowardice and fear of the Hypocrites. Allāh says, *"They think that every shout is against them."* Whenever they hear something being said, they fear that it should not reveal their hypocrisy. They then feel that some calamity will befall them. Allāh warns the Muslims, *"They are enemies so beware of them."* Muslims should beware that the hypocrites should never cause difficulty for them. Allāh then says, *"May Allāh destroy them! Whence are they wandering astray?"*

"When they are told, 'Come forward and Allāh's messenger will seek forgiveness for you,' they turn their heads around and you see them arrogantly turning away." *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* (*v. 4 p. 350*) narrates that when the verses of Surah Munāfiqūn exposed the truthfulness of Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضی الله عنه and the lie of Abdullāh in Ubay, someone said to Abdullāh bin Ubay, "See what a stern reprimand has been revealed against you. Why do you not go to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and ask him to pray to Allāh to forgive you?" To this, Abdullāh bin Ubay responded by turning his head around and arrogantly saying, "I believed when you people asked me to believe and I even gave Zakāh when you people asked me to. Now the only thing left is for you to ask me to prostrate to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم."It was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the verse, *"When they are told, 'Come forward and Allāh's messenger will seek forgiveness for you,' they turn their heads around and you see them arrogantly turning away."*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that they *"turn their heads away"* as a sign of mocking the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh then asserts, *"It is the same to them whether you seek forgiveness for them or whether you do not seek forgiveness for them. Allāh shall never forgive them (because their hearts have already been sealed). Verily Allāh does not guide the sinful nation."*

THE HYPOCRITES TELL OTHERS NOT TO SPEND ON THE MUSLIMS

Further describing the hypocrites, Allāh says, *"They are the ones who say, 'Do not spend on those with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم until they disperse.'"* This statement was another of the many ignorant statements that the hypocrites were used to making.

In this statement they regard themselves as providers, forgetting that Allāh is the One Who provides. They thought that if they stopped supporting the Immigrants, they would be forced to seek their own sustenance and desert the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the process. People enamoured with this world are given to making such statements and they often harass those working and collecting for Masājid (*mosques*) and Madāris (*religious schools*) thinking that it is their money that run these institutions.

Allāh replies to their intimidation by stating, *"To Allāh belongs the treasures of the heavens and the earth."* Allāh grants wealth and sustenance to whoever He wills and none can deprive another by withholding funds because Allāh can easily arrange another source of income. Allāh provides for all His creation. However, *"the hypocrites do not understand."*

HONOUR BELONGS TO ALLĀH, TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND TO THE BELIEVERS

"They say, 'If we return to Madinah, the honourable ones among us shall certainly exile the humiliated ones.'" Because the hypocrites resided in Madinah before the Immigrants arrived there, they regarded it as their city. Since the Immigrants were aliens to their city, the hypocrites held the opinion that they were the honourable ones and that the Immigrants were humiliated people. They made their intentions clear that they intended to expel the Immigrants from Madinah.

Allāh replies to their statement by saying, *"All honour belongs to Allāh, His messenger and the believers but the hypocrites do not know it."* The hypocrites felt that they are honourable because they have the material possessions of this world. However, their enjoyment in this world was short lived because they were soon banned from entering the Masjid. Although some of them sincerely accepted Islām and were able to live honourably, the rest of them died without accepting Islām and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was prohibited from performing their Janāzah Salāh (*funeral prayer*).

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن
يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَنفِقُوا۟ مِن مَّا رَزَقْنَٰكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن
يَأْتِىَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَآ أَخَّرْتَنِىٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن
مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَلَن يُؤَخِّرَ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهَا ۚ وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿١١﴾

(9) O you who believe! Let not your wealth and your children make you neglect Allāh's remembrance. Those who do this are certainly losers. (10) Spend from what We have provided for you before death comes to any of you and then he says, "O my Lord! Why do you not grant me respite for a little while so that I could spend in charity and become of the righteous." (11) Allāh shall not grant

respite to any soul when its term arrives. Allāh is Informed of what you do.

YOUR WEALTH AND CHILDREN SHOULD NOT MAKE YOU NEGLECT ALLĀH'S REMEMBRANCE

One's wealth and children are two factors that cause one to neglect remembrance of Allāh. They cause one to neglect one's Fardh (*obligatory*) and Wājib *(compulsory)* duties along with the Nafl (*mandatory*) acts of worship. They cause one to be engrossed in the affairs of this world and to continue earning wealth for oneself and for one's children. One then becomes obsessed with making one's children wealthy. It then happens that one does not care from what sources one earns one's wealth. One also neglects to pay one's Zakāh and other monetary obligations. Even if one's source of income is Hālāl (*Lawful*), deep engrossment in earning can still distract one from remembering Allāh. One is then given to spending one's wealth on one's family and children in avenues that are not permissible and that entail extravagant behaviour.

Allāh warns the Muslims saying, *"O you who believe! Let not your wealth and your children make you neglect Allāh 's remembrance."* One may earn to provide sufficiently for one's wife, children and parents because this forms part of Allāh's remembrance (since it entails fulfilling Allāh's commands). However, one should not make earning one's living the object of one's life because one will then be distracted from remembering Allāh. Allāh says, *"Those who do this (i.e. who allow their wealth and children to make them neglect Allāh's remembrance) are certainly losers."* Of course, the disbelievers are at a complete loss because they are doomed to eternal damnation in Hell. As for those believers who allow their wealth and children to distract them from Allāh's remembrance, they shall suffer to the extent of their negligence. A moment spent without Allāh's Dhikr (remembrance) is a great loss indeed.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that a person who once recites *"Subhā Nallāhi Wa Bi Hamdihi"* shall have a date palm planted for him in Heaven. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said that reciting *"Subhā Nallāhi wal Hamdu Lillāhi wa Lā Ilāha Illallāhu Allāhu Akbar"* is more beloved to him than everything on which the sun shines. Therefore, by neglecting Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* one will be depriving oneself of great blessings.

Allāh then instructs Muslims to spend their wealth in charity when He says, *"Spend from what We have provided for you before death comes to any of you..."* Every person earns wealth to spend it. Whereas the believers spend their wealth in avenues that please Allāh, people who love wealth and do not wish to practise religion prefer to hoard the wealth. They become slaves of their wealth and are reluctant to spend it even in Zakāh.

Allāh adds that people should spend in charity before death because when death overtakes them, it will be too late to carry out any good deed. After death, a person will plead to Allāh to return him to the world so that he may carry out the good deeds he neglected while alive. He will say, *"O my Lord! Why do you not grant me respite for a little while so that I could spend in charity and become of the righteous."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه once mentioned that whoever has

the means to perform Hajj and pay Zakāh but does not do so, will plead to Allāh to return him to this world so that he may donate in charity and carry out good deeds. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه then recited the verses: *"O you who believe! Let not your wealth and your children make you neglect Allāh's remembrance. Those who do this are certainly losers. Spend from what We have provided for you before death comes to any of you and then he says, 'O my Lord! Why do you not grant me respite for a little while so that I could spend in charity and become of the righteous. Allāh shall not grant respite to any soul when its term arrives. Allāh is Informed of what you do.*

Allāh concludes by saying, *"Allāh shall not grant respite to any soul when its term arrives."* Good deeds can be performed only before death. One should carry out as many good deeds as possible so that one does not have any regrets after death. None should think that his deeds are passing by unnoticed because *"Allāh is Informed of what you do."*

سورة التغابن

Madinan	Surah At-Taghābun	Verses 18

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (1) هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَمِنكُم مُّؤْمِنٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
بَصِيرٌ (2) خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ
الْمَصِيرُ (3) يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ (4) أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَبْلُ فَذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (5) ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُ كَانَت تَّأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرٌ يَهْدُونَنَا
فَكَفَرُوا وَتَوَلَّوا ۚ وَّاسْتَغْنَى اللَّهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ (6) زَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَن لَّن يُبْعَثُوا ۚ قُلْ
بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ (7) فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَالنُّورِ الَّذِي أَنزَلْنَا ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (8) يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ لِيَوْمِ الْجَمْعِ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ
التَّغَابُنِ ۗ وَمَن يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (9) وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ
(10)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) Whatever is in the heavens and on earth glorify Allāh. All kingdom and all praise belong to Him and He has power over all things. (2) It is He Who created you, so among you are believers and among you are disbelievers. Allāh is Watchful over what you do. (3) He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth, fashioned you and beautified your appearance. To Him shall the

return be. (4) He knows what is in the heavens and the earth, He knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allāh has knowledge of the secrets of the heart. (5) Has the news of the bygone disbelievers not reached you? They tasted the evil consequences of their affairs and theirs shall be a painful punishment. (6) This is because their messengers came to them with clear signs and they said, "Will a human guide us?" So they disbelieved and turned away. Allāh had no need for them. Allāh is Independent, Most Worthy of praise. (7) The disbelievers think that they will never be resurrected. Tell them, "Definitely by the oath of my Lord! You will certainly be resurrected and then you will be informed of what you did. This is very simple for Allāh." (8) So believe in Allāh, in His messenger and in the light that He revealed. Allāh is Informed of what you do. (9) The day when He will gather you for the day of gathering, that will be the day of great loss. The one who believes in Allāh and carries out good deeds, Allāh shall expiate his sins and enter him into gardens beneath which rivers flow. He shall abide there forever. That is the great success. (10) Those who disbelieve and falsify Our verses are the inmates of the Fire in which they shall abide forever. It is the worst of places to return to.

THERE ARE BELIEVERS AND DISBELIEVERS AMONG THOSE WHOM ALLĀH HAS CREATED

The word *"Taghābun"* is derived from the root word *"ghaban"*, which means *"a loss"*. The Day of Judgement is referred to as the Day of Taghābun in the 9th verse of this Surah because many people will suffer a great loss on this day. Allāh begins the Surah by stating, *"Whatever is in the heavens and on earth glorify Allāh."* All of creation either glorify Allāh verbally or physically by way of submitting to His commands. Furthermore, *"All kingdom and all praise belong to Him."* Allāh has complete control over all of creation and no one has the authority to question Him. Everything He does and every quality of His is praiseworthy. In addition to this, Allāh *"has power over all things."* Allāh can do whatever He wills and nothing is an obstacle in His way.

Allāh's creative powers are then expressed when he says, *"It is He Who created you, so among you are believers and among you are disbelievers."* Allāh created man and granted him intelligence to discern right from wrong. In addition to this, Allāh also sent the Prophets عليهم السلام and divine scriptures to guide man. Those who accepted Allāh's message became believers and those who put Allāh's guidance to waste remained disbelievers. Of course, *"Allāh is Watchful over what you do."* Allāh knows the physical deeds that people carry out as well as their thoughts and the inclinations of their hearts. He will reward the believers for their good works and punish the disbelievers for their disbelief and sins.

ALLĀH CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH AND FASHIONED MAN MOST BEAUTIFULLY

Allāh continues, *"He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth (wisdom), fashioned you and beautified your appearance."* One of Allāh's greatest bounties to man is that He has beautifully fashioned the appearance of man within the womb of his mother. Allāh created man's eyes, ears, arms, legs and all his other limbs and organs in perfect proportion to each other and He has granted beauty to them all. Man is therefore indebted to Allāh and ought to

express sincere gratitude to Him. Man himself is witness to the superior beauty that he enjoys over the rest of creation. Regardless of how unattractive a person may be and how beautiful another creation may appear, he will never want to exchange his physical appearance for that of the other creation.

"To Him shall the return be." Allāh is the only Creator, the only Fashioner and everyone shall return to Him. It is therefore imperative that a person turns only to Him, worships Him only, expresses gratitude to Him and engages in His remembrance at all times.

Allāh states further. *"He knows what is in the heavens and the earth, He knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allāh has knowledge of the secrets of the heart."* Allāh's knowledge is not restricted to what people say and do, but He is even Aware of what they think. One should always bear this in mind so that one may abstain from all evil.

LEARNING LESSONS FROM NATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN DESTROYED PREVIOUSLY

Addressing every reader of the Qur'ān, Allāh says, *"Has the news of the bygone disbelievers not reached you? They tasted the evil consequences of their affairs and theirs shall be a painful punishment."* Allāh warns people that if they do not desist from disbelief, they stand to face the same plight of the many nations that have been destroyed previously.

Allāh then mentions why the previous nations adamantly clung on to their beliefs of disbelief. Allāh says, *"This is because their messengers came to them with clear signs..."* However, instead of believing in these Prophets عليهم السلام and the miracles they showed, the people looked for excuses to reject and said, *"Will a human guide us?"* They told the Prophets عليهم السلام that the position of a Prophet can be filled only by pure beings like the angels. As a result, *"they disbelieved and turned away. Allāh had no need for them. Allāh is Independent, Most Worthy of praise."* Man benefits only himself by believing in and by worshipping Allāh. Allāh does not need anyone's worship. Therefore, those who choose disbelief will have to suffer the punishment for their sins. If people do not worship Allāh, His attributes will not diminish in the least. He remains Most Worthy of praise irrespective of man's worship.

THE FALSE NOTION OF THE DISBELIEVERS AND THE INVITATION TO BELIEVE

Allāh says. *"The disbelievers think that they will never be resurrected. Tell them, 'Definitely by the oath of my Lord! You will certainly be resurrected and then you will be informed of what you did. This is very simple for Allāh."*

"So believe in Allāh, in His messenger and in the light (the Qur'ān) that He revealed. Allāh is Informed of what you do."

Allāh then refers to the Day of Judgement when He says, *"The day when He will gather you for the day of gathering, that will be the day of great loss."* Although every person dies at a different time, they will all be gathered together on the Day of Judgment and collectively appear for reckoning. For this reason, it is called the "day of gathering".

The Day of Judgment is referred to as *"the day of great loss"* because people will lose a great deal on that day. As for the disbelievers, their loss is evident because they will lose the privilege of entering Heaven and will lose their souls in Hell. The loss that the believers will suffer will be that they will regret not carrying out more good deeds so that they could attain more bounties in Heaven.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, *"Every person to whom death comes shall be remorseful."* When the Prophets علیہم السلام asked about the remorse, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, *"The one who carried out good deeds will regret that he did not carry out any more good deeds and the sinful one will regret his disobedience."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 484*]

Sayyidina Muhammad bin Abi Umayra رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, *"If a person obediently prostrates before Allāh from the day he was born until the day he dies, he will still consider his deeds too meagre on the Day of Judgment. He will then express the desire to be returned to the world so that he could earn even more rewards."* [*"At Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 4 p. 397*]

Although some scholars interpret *"Taghābun"* as a two-way process where one party causes loss to another, this interpretation is incorrect because the disbelievers cannot cause any loss to the believers on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh then mentions the destiny that people will face on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says, *"The one who believes in Allāh and carries out good deeds, Allāh shall expiate his sins and enter him into gardens beneath which rivers flow. He shall abide there forever. That is the great success."*

On the contrary, *"Those who disbelieve and falsify Our verses are the inmates of the Fire in which they shall abide forever. It is the worst of places to return to."*

مَآ أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُۥ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٢﴾ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُمْ وَإِن تَعْفُوا۟ وَتَصْفَحُوا۟ وَتَغْفِرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ وَأَنفِقُوا۟ خَيْرًا لِّأَنفُسِكُمْ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ إِن تُقْرِضُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضَٰعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾

(11) Every calamity afflicts you only by Allāh's command. Allāh guides the heart

of the one who believes in Him and Allāh has knowledge of everything. (12) Obey Allāh and obey the messenger. If you turn away, then (be aware that) the responsibility of the messenger is only clear propagation. (13) He is Allāh besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. Only in Allāh should the believers trust. (14) O you who believe! You have enemies among your spouses and children so be wary of them. If you pardon, overlook and forgive, then Allāh is certainly Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (15) Your wealth and children are merely a test. Great rewards are with Allāh. (16) So fear Allāh as much as you can, listen, obey and spend. This is best for you. Those who are saved from the miserliness of their souls are indeed the successful ones. (17) If you lend to Allāh a beautiful loan, He will multiply your rewards and forgive you. Allāh is Appreciative, Tolerant... (18) ..... Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise.

EVERY CALAMITY STRIKES BY ALLĀH'S C OMMAND

These concluding verses of Surah Taghābun discuss several issues. Allāh says, *"Every calamity afflicts you only by Allāh's command."* Therefore, one should be happy with every condition because every condition comes from Allāh. When a calamity afflicts one, one should accept that it is from Allāh and one should bear it with patience. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Whatever (difficulty) afflicts you could have never missed you and what misses you could never have afflicted you."* [*Ibn Majah p. 9*]

Allāh says further, *"Allāh guides the heart of the one who believes in Him..."* This means that Allāh grants the believer the ability to exercise patience when afflicted with an adversity so that he is able to earn great rewards. Whenever he is afflicted with difficulty, he says, *"Innā Lillāhi wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn"* (*"To Allāh we belong and to Him shall we return"*).

"Allāh has knowledge of everything." Allāh is well aware of the behaviour of those who exercise patience as well as those who do not exercise patience. He grants each person the reward or punishment due to him.

Allāh then instructs, *"Obey Allāh and obey the messenger. If you turn away, then (be aware that) the responsibility of the messenger is only clear propagation."* Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has propagated the message of Islām, it is up to the individual to accept. It was not his responsibility to force people to accept Islām.

Allāh Ta'āla continues, *"He is Allāh besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. Only in Allāh should the believers trust."*

SOME WIVES AND CHILDREN ARE ENEMIES

Allāh says, *"O you who believe! You have enemies among your spouses and children so be wary of them."* Man needs to marry and have children. The love between husband, wife and children is natural and Islām encourages this love. However, Islām has stipulated a limit for this love. The limit is that Allāh's right should take precedence over all these forms of love. Whether the person be one's husband or wife, son or daughter, one is allowed to have only that much love for them which will not prevent one from fulfilling the injunctions of the Shari'ah. One should live one's life according to the Shari'ah, together with loving one's

family as well.

'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that when some Muslims in Makkah decided to migrate to Madinah, their wives and children said to them, *"We endured your conversion to Islām but will be unable to endure your migration."* Hearing this, they forsook the idea of migrating. It was with reference to this that Allāh revealed the verse, *"O you who believe! You have enemies among your spouses and children so be wary of them."*

Another circumstance of revelation narrated concerns Sayyidina Awf bin Mālik Ashja'ī رضى الله عنه. When he once intended to proceed in Jihād, his wife and children prevented him saying, *"To whom are you leaving us?"* Upon hearing this, he changed his mind. It was also with reference to this incident that the verse was revealed. Allāh therefore warns Muslims to beware that their spouses and children do not prevent them from carrying out good deeds.

The Arabic word *"azwāj"* (translated above as *"spouses* - is the plural of the word *"zawj"* which refers to husbands and wives. Therefore, every male and female Muslim should ensure that his/her children and spouse do not place obstacles in the path of religion.

DO NOT DESTROY YOURSELF FOR THE LOVE OF YOUR WIFE OR CHILDREN

Both husbands and wives should carry out the injunctions of the Shari'ah and should ensure that their children do the same. If one has so much love for one's wife or children that it prevents one from fulfilling the injunctions of the Shari'ah, this love is actually enmity and it will manifest itself as such on the plains of resurrection. There one will have to face the punishment for the sins one carried out on account of one's love for them. One will be foolish to tire oneself in earning for one's family when one's source of income is unlawful. Added to the sin of earning unlawful wealth, one will then be burdened by the dual sins of consuming unlawful and also feeding others with it. One will have to suffer the punishment of all these sins in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

One will notice many men engaging in Unlawful activities just to please their families. They will be seen taking loans on interest, embezzling funds and taking goods on credit merely so that their wives can dress most exquisitely for every function. They even accept bribes so that they can maintain the extravagant lifestyles of their families. Intoxicated by their passions, their families fail to realise that they are destroying the man's life in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. When the man will witness the suffering he is destined for in the Hereafter, his wife and children will not be able to assist him at all. He will then see them as the enemies they were. Instead of advising him to do good, to abstain from evil and to prepare for his Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, they kept him occupied in fulfilling their every whim and desire.

Of course, all wives and children are not like this. There are many who offer good counsel and encourage the practise and propagation of Religion. It is for this reason that the verse states that one has enemies "among" one's spouses and children. It does not say that all of them are enemies.

Thereafter, Allāh encourages forgiveness. Allāh says, *"If you pardon, overlook*

and forgive, then Allāh is certainly Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." It often occurs that one's spouse or children make a request that one dislikes or that one cannot fulfil. As a result, one naturally becomes upset. With reference to such situations, Allāh advises Muslims that they should overlook and forgive. Allāh is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful and will forgive one when one acts in this manner.

WEALTH AND CHILDREN ARE A TEST

Allāh tells man, *"Your wealth and children are merely a test. Great rewards are with Allāh."* Earning one's wealth and spending the wealth is a test for man, as is rearing children and living with them. In carrying out these activities, one should be careful that one does not transgress any of Allāh's laws and that one does not make these the object of one's life. Tending these things must not prevent one from obeying Allāh's commands. The greatest rewards are with Allāh, so one should concentrate all one's efforts towards pleasing Allāh by fulfilling the requirements of Belief. Verse 28 of Surah Anfāl (*Surah 8*) is similar to this verse. One should refer to the commentary of that verse for a more detailed explanation of how one's wealth and children are a test for one.

TAQWA *(FEAR ALLĀH)* AND SPENDING IN ALLĀH'S PATH

"So fear Allāh as much as you can, listen, obey and spend. This is best for you." This verse includes several pieces of advice. Adopting Taqwa (translated above as *'fear Allāh "*) entails abstaining from everything that Allāh has prohibited and fulfilling all the injunctions that He has ordained. Allāh has not ordained anything that is beyond man's capability. Of course, certain acts require one to apply oneself and suppress one's desires. Whatever good deeds one carries out and whatever wealth one spends in Allāh's path will benefit one because one will enjoy the rewards for this. It is for this reason that Allāh says, *"This is best for you."*

Allāh continues, *"Those who are saved from the miserliness of their souls are indeed the successful ones."* The discussion concerning miserliness and *"Shuh"* in particular has been given in the commentary of verse 9 of Surah Hashr (*Surah 59*).

A LOAN GIVEN TO ALLĀH

"If you lend to Allāh a beautiful loan, He will multiply your rewards and forgive you." A *"beautiful"* loan refers to charity that is given with sincerity and with a happy heart. Everyone and everything belongs to Allāh, even the wealth that one possesses. It is Allāh's grace that He rewards people for spending the wealth that belongs to Him. Spending in good causes is termed as a loan only because it resembles a loan. In reality, Allāh needs nothing and the person spending has everything to gain. This discussion has been given in the commentary of verse 245 of Surah Baqarah.

"Allāh is Appreciative" because He gives tremendous rewards for even the smallest deeds. Allāh is also *"Tolerant"* because He does not punish people immediately after they have sinned and He also forgives sins as soon as the sinner repents. In addition to this, Allāh is also the *"Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise."*

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سورة الطلاق

Madinan	Surah At-Talāq	Verses 12

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
رَبَّكُمْ ۖ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِينَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ
وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۚ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ
بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرًا (1) فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ
وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوَيْ عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا (2) وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۚ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا (3)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! When you wish to divorce your wives, then divorce them before their waiting period and count the waiting period. Fear Allāh your Lord. Do not turn them out of their homes and neither should they leave by themselves unless they perpetrate flagrant indecency. These are the limits set by Allāh. Whoever transgresses Allāh's limits has certainly oppressed his soul. You do not know whether Allāh may later bring something new to pass. (2) So when they have reached close to completing their waiting periods, then either keep them in good faith or separate from them in good faith. Make two reliable persons witness and establish the testimony for Allāh. It is with this that the one who believes in Allāh and the Last Day is advised. Allāh shall create an escape for the one who fears Him (i.e. the one who has Taqwa)... (3) ... and shall provide for him from sources that he never expected. Allāh is Sufficient for the one who trusts in Him. Allāh shall certainly bring His affairs to completion and Allāh has set a measure for everything.

THE LAWS OF "TALĀQ" AND "IDDAH"

The opening verses of Surah Talāq discusses some laws of *"Talāq"* (divorce) and *"Iddah"* (the waiting period after divorce). Because the Surah deals with laws pertaining to women, it is also referred to as Surah Nisā Qusra i.e. the short Surah Nisā (Nisā means women). Bukhari narrates that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه referred to the Surah by this name.

When a man and a woman join in *"Nikāh"* (marriage), they really intend to establish a relationship for a lifetime. However, it does happen that they are incompatible or that they have to be separated for some other reasons. Therefore, the Shari'ah has instituted the laws of Talāq (divorce). When a husband divorces his wife, she has to observe the Iddah (*waiting period*). She is not allowed to marry another man until her Iddah (*waiting period*) has expired. There is a difference in the length of Iddah (*waiting period*) for women who menstruate, pregnant women and women who have passed menopause.

When a woman is divorced and she still menstruates, the duration of her Iddah will be three periods of menstruation according to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه and Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal رحمة الله عليه. According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, the duration of her Iddah (*waiting period*) will be three periods of *"Tuhr"* (a period of Tuhr is the period between two menstrual cycles i.e. when a woman does not bleed). This difference of opinion stems from the interpretation of the Arabic word *"Qurū"* in verse 228 of Surah Baqara. This word has a dual meaning and may be translated as menses or as Tuhr. While some jurists have taken the first meaning, others have taken the second. Each group has its proofs to substantiate its stand. The details of this can be found in the detailed books of jurisprudence.

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"O The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*! When you wish to divorce your wives, then divorce them before their waiting period."* Although the initial address is to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the verse is subsequently phrased using plural pronouns (note that this change in address is not reflected in the English translation). This indicates that the instruction is directed to the entire Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The phrase *"divorce them before their waiting period"* means that the divorce should take place at a time when the woman can commence her Iddah (*waiting period*) without undue delay. The Iddah (*waiting period*) will commence from the menstrual cycle that follows the divorce. This menstrual cycle and the two after it will complete the Iddah (*waiting period*). It is therefore most appropriate that the divorce is given during a period of Tuhr so that the Iddah can commence as soon as the menstrual cycle begins. According to the instruction of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Ahadīth, a Talāq (*divorce*) should be pronounced during a period of Tuhr in which no intercourse has taken place.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه divorced his wife while she was menstruating. When his father Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه mentioned this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم became very angry and instructed Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه to retract the divorce, to keep his wife for a period of Tuhr, to wait for another menstrual cycle to pass and to issue another divorce only during the second period of Tuhr if he still wanted to.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also told him that the divorce should take place during a Tuhr in which no intercourse has taken place. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said to him, *"This is the Iddah (waiting period) that Allāh has commanded."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 729*]

This Hadith makes it clear that it is not permissible to divorce a woman who is experiencing her menstrual cycle. It is also clear that when divorce is given during Tuhr, the woman will be able to complete three complete periods of menstruation as soon as the Tuhr expires. According to the Shafi'ī school of jurisprudence, the divorce should be pronounced at the beginning of the Tuhr so that three periods of Tuhr can commence immediately.

"..... and count the waiting period." This part of the verse instructs people to carefully count the passing days of the Iddah (*waiting period*) because many laws hinge on the expiry of the Iddah. When a woman receives a *'Raj'ī"* divorce from her husband, he is entitled to take her back into his marriage before the expiry of the Iddah and he is obliged to pay her maintenance during this period. If the husband does not take her back during the Iddah , she will be free to marry someone else after the expiry of her Iddah . If the period of Iddah is not carefully calculated, certain laws may be violated. Examples of such violations are:

She may marry someone else before the expiry of her Iddah (*waiting period*).

She may be demanding maintenance after the expiry of tile Iddah.

The husband may decide to take her back, after the expiry of the Iddah, thinking that the Iddah has not yet expired.

Further details concerning Talāq and Iddah (*waiting period*) have been mentioned in the commentaries of verses 228 to 230 of Surah Baqarah and verse 49 of Surah Ahzāb (*Surah* 33).

Allāh adds *"Fear Allāh your Lord."* This part of the verse cautions the couple against violating Allāh's commands in the matter of the Iddah. No woman should falsely claim that her Iddah has expired. She should also not falsify the expiry date with the intention of receiving extra maintenance. By the same token, no man should falsely claim that he had taken his wife back during the Iddah.

DIVORCEES MAY NOT BE TURNED OUT OF THEIR HOMES

Allāh says, *"Do not turn them (divorcees) out of their homes..."* A divorced woman should be allowed to spend her Iddah (*waiting period*) in her husband's home. She is entitled to spend her Iddah there and the onus is on the husband to provide for her. No one has the right to turn divorcees out of their houses during their period of Iddah. Allāh Ta'āla also makes it clear that *"neither should they (women) leave by themselves..."* Allāh Ta'āla then cites the exception when divorcees may be turned out of their husband's houses. This is when *"they perpetrate flagrant indecency."* According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه, *'flagrant indecency"* refers to fornication (after divorce), in which case the woman will be taken from the home to be lashed. She will then be returned to

the same home. According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, a woman will be guilty of *'flagrant indecency"* when she uses offensive language when addressing the husband and his family. In this case she will not be permitted to live with them in the same house.

"These are the limits set by Allāh. Whoever transgresses Allāh 's limits has certainly oppressed his soul." The person who transgresses the limits that Allāh has set is subjecting himself to punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* and is therefore oppressing himself. One will be guilty of oppressing oneself if one violates any of the laws of Talāq (*divorce*) or Iddah (*waiting period*).

"You do not know whether Allāh may later bring something new to pass" i.e after the divorce. It may occur that a man regrets the divorce after a while and may decide to take his wife back. It is therefore necessary that a person observes the injunctions of the Shari'ah when he intends to divorce his wife.

The author of *'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* writes that this part of the verse makes it clear that three divorces should not be pronounced all at once because this denies a man the right to take his wife back. If three divorces have to be pronounced, each should be issued in a separate Tuhr. A person retains the right to take back his wife within the Iddah (*waiting period*) if he issues two clear divorces because the divorce will be regarded as *'Raj'ī* (reversible)". However, if he issues a *"Bā'in (irreversible)"* divorce, he will also be deprived of the right to retain her. In this case, he will first require her consent. However, when three divorces are issued all at once, even this option will be forfeited. One should therefore be extremely cautious in the matter.

WHEN THE IDDAH (*WAITING PERIOD*) IS NEAR COMPLETION, THE DIVORCEE MAY EITHER BE TAKEN BACK IN GOOD FAITH OR SEPARATED IN GOOD FAITH

Allāh says, *"So when they (divorcees) have reached close to completing their waiting periods, then either keep them in good faith or separate from them in good faith."* Whatever option the husband chooses, his intention should not be to harm the woman in any way. He will be sinful if he takes her back before the expiry of the Iddah (*waiting period*) with the intention of issuing another divorce so that she is forced to spend another period of Iddah. This has been discussed in Surah Baqarah where Allāh says, *"When you divorce women, and they reach their term (Iddah), then retain them in kindness or release them in kindness. Do not retain them to hurt them and transgress the limits set by Allāh, for whoever does so, has verily oppressed his own soul. "*[*Surah 2, verse 231*]

Allāh states further, *"Make two reliable persons witness." It* is Mustahab (preferable though not compulsory) to have two reliable men witness the husband's choice of either keeping his wife or separating from her. The witnesses should be pious and truthful men. Their testimony will be required should a dispute arise about the issue.

"and establish the testimony for Allāh." This part of the verse enjoins that the testimony should be given properly and to please Allāh so that the wronged person may receive his dues. The verse also means that the witnesses should not request payment for rendering their testimony because it is not permissible to do

so. Of course, they may be reimbursed for the costs they incur in travelling to the court. The details concerning testimony have been discussed in the commentary of verses 282 and 283 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah* 2).

"It is with this that the one who believes in Allāh and the Last Day is advised." All the injunctions mentioned in the foregoing verses are replete with guidance and can bring only good to the person who practises them. The one who is convinced about the coming of the Day of Judgement knows that he has to adhere to these teachings because he will have to stand before Allāh Ta'āla and account for his deeds.

THE VIRTUES OF "TAQWA (*PIETY*)" AND "TAWAKKUL (*TRUST IN ALLĀH*)"

Allāh continues, *"Allāh shall create an escape for the one who fears Him (i.e. the one who has Taqwa) and shall provide for him from sources that he never expected."* "Ta qwa" basically entails carrying out Allāh's commands and abstaining from everything that He has forbidden. Adopting Taqwa (*piety*) in the laws of Talāq (*divorce*) and Iddah as well as in all other aspects of life will certainly bring good to a person. Taqwa guarantees success for a believer in both worlds. Allāh has promised two things for a person of Taqwa.

The first promise is that Allāh shall create an escape for him from every difficulty. Man is plagued by various adversities and difficulties in this world. Those who attempt to ward off their problems by employing sinful means only find themselves sinking even deeper into the problem. Allāh advises man that the solution to all his problems lies in adopting Taqwa (*peity*).

A person once approached Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه and said, "I have pronounced three divorces. (Is there any way in which I can have my wife back?)" Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه replied, "You people do foolish things and then say, 'O Ibn Abbās! O Ibn Abbās!' Allāh Ta'āla says, 'Allāh shall create an escape for the one who fears Him (i.e. the one who has Taqwa)'. You have not displayed any Taqwa (*peity*). I cannot find any escape for you from this problem. Your wife has been separated from you because you disobeyed Allāh." [*Abu Dawūd p. 299*]

The second promise that Allāh makes to the person who adopts Taqwa (*peity*) is that Allāh *"shall provide for him from sources that he never expected.* "Both these promises shall be realised in this world as well as in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"I know of a verse that is sufficient for people if they practise it. The verse is 'Allāh shall create an escape for the one who fears Him (i.e. the one who his Taqwa) and shall provide for him from sources that he never expected.'"* [*""Mishkāt"" p. 453*]

"Allāh is Sufficient for the one who trusts in Him. "Whereas Allāh makes the foregoing promises of availing His unseen help to those who adopt Taqwa (*piety*), He also makes a promise to those who adopt Tawakkul (i.e. those who trust in Him). Allāh tells them that He shall suffice for them against all odds. Taqwa and Tawakkul are the wheels on a believer's vehicle and are indispensable to him.

Sayyidina Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Man's heart remains somewhat occupied in one valley or another. Allāh has no concern for the person who places all of his heart in these occupations and he will destroy himself in one of these valleys. However, Allāh will see to all of these occupations for the person who has Tawakkul (*trust*) in Him. [""*Mishkāt*"" *p. 453*]

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If you trust in Allāh as He deserves to be trusted, He will provide for you just as He provides for the birds. They leave in the mornings with empty bellies and return in the evening with their bellies full." [""*Mishkāt*"" *p. 452 from Tirmidhi*]

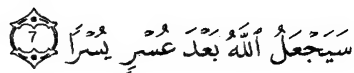
There are various levels of Tawakkul [*trust (in Allāh)*]. Forsaking means is one of these levels and it is this approach that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم adopted. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said, 'I have not received revelation instructing me to amass wealth and to be a trader. Instead, revelation has instructed me to 'glorify the praises of your Lord and be of the ones who prostrate. And worship your Lord until the certainty (death) comes to you. '" [*"Mishkāt" p. 444*]

A person who adopts the necessary means to acquire things but who does not exclusively pin his reliance on these means is also regarded as one who adopts Tawakkul [*trust (in Allāh)*]. Although such a person uses the means at his disposal, he still trusts in Allāh. When one realises that Allāh is the Provider regardless of the means, one will be able to abstain from sinful means of earning one's living.

ALLĀH HAS SET A MEASURE FOR EVERYTHING

"Allāh shall certainly bring His affairs to completion." Whatever Allāh decides to do shall certainly come to pass and He is at liberty to decree whatever injunction He deems appropriate. None can stop Him.

"Allāh has set a measure for everything." It is in accordance with this set measure that Allāh decrees conditions and injunctions.

وَٱلَّـٰٓـِٔي يَئِسۡنَ مِنَ ٱلۡمَحِيضِ مِن نِّسَآئِكُمۡ إِنِ ٱرۡتَبۡتُمۡ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَٰثَةُ أَشۡهُرٖ وَٱلَّـٰٓـِٔي لَمۡ يَحِضۡنَۚ وَأُوْلَٰتُ ٱلۡأَحۡمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَن يَضَعۡنَ حَمۡلَهُنَّۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ يَجۡعَل لَّهُۥ مِنۡ أَمۡرِهِۦ يُسۡرٗا ﴿4﴾ ذَٰلِكَ أَمۡرُ ٱللَّهِ أَنزَلَهُۥٓ إِلَيۡكُمۡۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ يُكَفِّرۡ عَنۡهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِۦ وَيُعۡظِمۡ لَهُۥٓ أَجۡرًا ﴿5﴾ أَسۡكِنُوهُنَّ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ سَكَنتُم مِّن وُجۡدِكُمۡ وَلَا تُضَآرُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُواْ عَلَيۡهِنَّۚ وَإِن كُنَّ أُوْلَٰتِ حَمۡلٖ فَأَنفِقُواْ عَلَيۡهِنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَضَعۡنَ حَمۡلَهُنَّۚ فَإِنۡ أَرۡضَعۡنَ لَكُمۡ فَـَٔاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَأۡتَمِرُواْ بَيۡنَكُم بِمَعۡرُوفٖۖ وَإِن تَعَاسَرۡتُمۡ فَسَتُرۡضِعُ لَهُۥٓ أُخۡرَىٰ ﴿6﴾ لِيُنفِقۡ ذُو سَعَةٖ مِّن سَعَتِهِۦۖ وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيۡهِ رِزۡقُهُۥ فَلۡيُنفِقۡ مِمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُۚ لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفۡسًا إِلَّا مَآ ءَاتَىٰهَاۚ

(4) If you are in doubt concerning those women who have lost hope of menstruating, then their waiting period and the waiting period of those women who do not menstruate shall be three months. The period of pregnant women shall be when they deliver. Allāh shall create ease in the affair of the one who fears Him (i.e. the one who has Taqwa). (5) This is Allāh's command that He has revealed to you. For the one who fears Allāh, Allāh shall expiate his sins and grant him an immense reward. (6) According to your means, house them (the divorcees) where you house yourselves and do not harm them with intent to pressurise them. If they are expecting, then provide for them until they deliver. If they suckle for you, then pay them their dues and consult with each other in a befitting manner. If each one makes matters difficult for the other, then another woman may suckle the child. (7) The wealthy person should spend according to his ability. As for the one whose means are restricted, he should spend from what Allāh has given him. Allāh does not burden a soul with more than He has given it. Allāh shall soon create ease after difficulty.

ADDITIONAL LAWS CONCERNING THE IDDAH (*WAITING PERIOD*)

Allāh stipulates an Iddah (*waiting period*) of three months for the woman who has passed menopause and for the woman who has not yet begun menstruating. The Iddah of a pregnant woman will terminate as soon as she delivers the child or when she aborts a child whose limbs have already formed. According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, this shall be the Iddah of a pregnant woman if she is divorced and even if her husband passes away. Whereas the Iddah of another widow is four months and ten days, the Iddah of a pregnant woman will expire as soon as she delivers - even though the child is born a few minutes after her husband's death. In a like manner, the Iddah of a pregnant divorcee will also expire as soon as she delivers and not after three menstrual cycles.

NOTE: If a woman is divorced before husband and wife could share any time in privacy, she will not have to observe the Iddah (*waiting period*).

NOTE: If a woman stopped menstruating without her having reached menopause, her Iddah (*waiting period*) will not expire after three months. She will have to wait until three menses pass or until she undergoes menopause.

Allāh states further, *"Allāh shall create ease in the affair of the one who fears Him (i.e. the one who has Taqwa). "*Allāh shall make matters easy for this person in this world as well as in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. *"This is Allāh's command that He has revealed to you. For the one who fears Allāh, Allāh shall expiate his sins and grant him an immense reward."*

The virtues of adopting Taqwa (*peity*) have been mentioned thrice in this Surah. These are:

1. "Allāh shall create an escape for the one who fears Him [i.e. the one who has Taqwa (piety)] and shall provide for him from sources that he never expected"

2. "Allāh shall create ease in the affair of the one who fears Him [i.e. the one who has Taqwa (piety)]."

3. "For the one who fears Allāh (i.e. the one who adopts 'Taqwa), Allāh shall expiate his sins and grant him an immense reward."

These verses clearly express the great virtue of adopting Taqwa (*piety*) because it guarantees Allāh's promises which never fail to pass. When a person adopts Taqwa he will see the manifestation of Allāh's promises. Because Muslims have generally forsaken Taqwa and Tawakkul [*trust (in Allāh)*] and have immersed themselves in sin and running after the things of this world, they find themselves deprived of Allāh's unseen assistance.

LAWS CONCERNING THE MAINTENANCE OF DIVORCEES

There are five categories of women who are required to observe a period of Iddah (*waiting period*). These are:

1. Divorcees who are given Raj'ī (reversible) divorces and who are not expecting.

2. Divorcees who are given Bā'in (irreversbile) or Mughallaza divorces and who are not expecting

3. Divorcees who are expecting.

4. Divorcees who have exercised the option of Khula (divorce obtain by a wife for a ransom of her dowry).

5. Widows.

Each of the above women have a right to the following:

1. Food and drink.

2. Housing.

3. Clothing.

The husband who issues the divorce is obliged to provide maintenance for his divorced wife during her Iddah (*waiting period*). This will apply in all situations of divorce, Raj'ī, Bā'in and. Mughallaza irrespective of whether the wife is expecting or not. In addition to this, he will have to provide living quarters for her during this period. If he houses her in his own home, he will not be able to have any contact with her (not even see her) if the Talāq is Bā'in or Mughallaza. Khula is regarded as a Bā'in divorce and a woman divorced as a result of Khula will also have to observe Iddah.

When a woman becomes widowed, her maintenance will not be paid from the husband's estate. She will have to use the wealth she inherits or her dowry to sustain herself if she has no other wealth or if no one is willing to support her. If she does not even have this much and is forced to work outside her home, she may leave her house to work during the day donned in the Veil that the Shari'ah ordains. However, she should spend every night at home during the Iddah (*waiting period*). If she gets delayed returning from work, she is allowed to return a little later in evening.

A widow should spend her Iddah (*waiting period*) in the house where she lived with her husband. She may spend her Iddah elsewhere only if:

- *The house does not have enough means in it for her to live after dissolving the estate.*
- *'The heirs force her out of the house.*
- *The house was rented and she cannot afford to pay the rent.*
- *Her life or property is threatened if she lives there.*

THE COMMAND TO HOUSE THE DIVORCEE

Allāh continues, *"According to your means, house them (the divorcees) where you house yourselves and do not harm them with intent to pressurise them (into leaving the house)."* The husband should provide accommodation for his divorced wife and he should not resort to any means by which she is forced to leave the house. Allāh states further, *"If they are expecting, then provide for them until they deliver."* The Iddah (*waiting period*) of an expectant woman expires as soon as she delivers. It is necessary for the husband to provide for her until she delivers the child even though it may be nine months later.

LAWS CONCERNING SUCKLING

Addressing the men who have divorced their wives, Allāh says, *"If they (the divorcees) suckle for you, then pay them their dues..."* When a child is born, the father and mother together share the responsibility of raising the child. While the father earns for the family, the mother tends to the feeding of the children and to other domestic chores. However, once the couple have divorced, this arrangement may change. The mother will naturally still want to suckle the child and if she does so without asking remuneration, it would be best. If she does ask for remuneration for suckling, the husband will be obliged to pay because it is his responsibility to provide for the child. This matter is discussed in the above verse.

In addition to this, Allāh instructs, *"and consult with each other in a befitting manner."* The wife should not demand an exorbitant sum as payment for suckling the child and once a sum has been agreed on, she should not refuse to suckle. The husband should not be uncompromising, thinking that the wife is obliged to suckle the child irrespective of how much he pays. Similarly, the wife should also not be uncompromising simply because the father is obliged to provide. Each should consider the welfare of the child and act in the child's best interests, putting their own prejudices aside.

The husband is not obliged to agree to the price that his wife demands if it is exorbitant. He is at liberty to hire another woman to suckle the child in such an event. Of course, none can replace a child's mother. It is therefore best if the couple come to some agreement by which the child's mother is able to suckle. Some details concerning suckling has been discussed in the commentary of verse 233 of Surah Baqarah.

NOTE: When the divorced mother takes the child for suckling during the Iddah (*waiting period*), she will be receiving maintenance from her husband. She is therefore not entitled to ask remuneration for suckling during the Iddah. Once her Iddah expires and the child is still being suckled, she may then ask for remuneration for suckling if she chooses to do so. The husband will then be obliged to pay her for this in addition to the maintenance that he is required to pay for the rearing of the child.

"If each one makes matters difficult for the other, then another woman may suckle the child." If the mother demands too much and the father is not willing to pay, the father will have to find another woman to suckle the child. Although the verse is a command for the father to find another woman to suckle, the wording of the verse infers that Allāh will see to the sustenance of the child even if the mother cannot. How many motherless children has Allāh Ta'āla not provided for?

"The wealthy person should spend according to his ability. As for the one whose means are restricted, he should spend from what Allāh has given him. Allāh does not burden a soul with more than He has given it." Each father should spend on his family according to his means. When Allāh grants a person children, He will also provide the means to care for the child.

ALLĀH CREATES EASE AFTER EVERY DIFFICULTY

Allāh says, *"Allāh shall soon create ease after difficulty."* When a person spends in good causes, he should never fear that his wealth will diminish. The books of jurisprudence usually mention only food, drink and accommodation as being binding on the husband during the Iddah (*waiting period*)h. The author of *"Bahrur Rā'iq"* has quoted from several other books that if the Iddah is prolonged for some reason (e.g. her menses are delayed) and if she needs clothing, the Qādhi (Muslim judge) can rule that he has to provide clothing as well. However, this is usually not mentioned because women generally do have sufficient clothing to wear during the period of the Iddah.

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِۦ فَحَاسَبْنَٰهَا حِسَابًا شَدِيدًا وَعَذَّبْنَٰهَا عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ﴿8﴾
فَذَاقَتْ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ أَمْرِهَا خُسْرًا ﴿9﴾ أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ قَدْ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴿10﴾ رَّسُولًا يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
مُبَيِّنَٰتٍ لِّيُخْرِجَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ

(8) Many were the towns that rebelled against the commands of their Lord and of His messengers, so We severely took them to task and meted out an admonishing punishment to them. (9) They tasted the consequences of their deeds and the end result their deeds was a total loss. (10). Allāh prepared a severe punishment for them. So fear Allāh O intelligent ones.., who have believed. Allāh has certainly revealed a Reminder to you. (11) (And Allāh has also sent to you) a messenger who recites Allāh's clear verses to you to remove the believers who do good deeds from darkness and to bring them into light. Whoever believes in Allāh and does good deeds, Allāh' shall enter him into gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they shall abide forever. Allāh has appointed a most excellent provision for him.

THE COMMAND TO LEARN A LESSON FROM NATIONS WHO WERE DESTROYED IN THE PAST

In the above verses Allāh tells people about the nations of the past who were destroyed because they rebelled against Allāh and His Prophets عليهم السلام. People are thereby encouraged to believe and to carry out good deeds so that they do not suffer the same fate. The people of the previous nations were destroyed by Allāh's punishment and will have to face severe reckoning in the Hereafter. In addition to this, they will also have to face the punishment of Hell. In this world already, they had a taste of Allāh's punishment and the real punishment will face them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. The end-result of their deeds was therefore a total loss because it brought them no good whatsoever. *"Allāh prepared a severe punishment for them."*

THE QUR'ĀN IS A GREAT REMINDER

Allāh says, *"So fear Allāh O intelligent ones who have believed. Allāh has certainly sent a Reminder to you"* i.e. the Qur'ān. In addition to this Qur'ān, Allāh has also sent *"a messenger who recites Allāh's clear verses to you."* The verses of the Qur'ān are extremely clear, and make the truth stand out from falsehood. Allāh has sent the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم "to remove the believers who do good deeds from darkness and to bring them into light." Those who do not believe in the Qur'ān and who do not follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم shall remain in the perpetual darkness of disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*. Eventually they will have to suffer the darkness of Hell.

Allāh then describes the bounties that the pious believers shall receive when He says, *"Whoever believes in Allāh and does good deeds, Allāh shall enter him into gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they shall abide forever. Allāh has appointed a most excellent provision for him."* The provisions of Heaven shall last forever.

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ وَمِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ ٱلْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًۢا ﴿١٢﴾

(12) It is Allāh Who created the seven heavens and the earth in a like manner. He sends commands between them so that you may know that Allāh has power over all things and that Allāh's knowledge encompasses everything.

ALLĀH CREATED THE SEVEN HEAVENS AND THE SEVEN EARTHS

Allāh concludes the Surah by stating, *"It is Allāh Who created the seven heavens and the earth in a like manner"* i.e. seven in number. *"He sends commands between them."* Allāh sends His commands to the sevens heavens and the seven earths because His creation live in all of these realms. Allāh's commands that affect the physical universe affect the lives of all His creation e.g. the command for rain to fall, for a disaster to strike, etc. Allāh also issues commands that form the injunctions of the Shari'ah. Man and Jinn are obliged to carry out those commands.

Majority of the Scholars are of the opinion that the seven earths form seven layers one above the other just as the seven heavens do. The fact that man is unable to witness this does not affect the reality of the matter. The believer believes what Allāh tells him whether he can see it or not. Authentic Ahadīth confirm the existence of seven earths. Such Ahadīth are narrated by Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Zaid رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها in Bukhari (*v. 1 p. 543)* and Muslim (*v. 2 p. 32, 33*).

The hadith of Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه states that the person who even once usurped the land of another, Allāh shall plunge him through the seven earths until the Day of Judgment.

Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always recited the following supplication whenever he entered a locality:

{TRANSLATION: O Allāh! Lord of the seven heavens and whatever is beneath them! Lord of the seven earth's and whatever is upon them! Lord of the Satan and whoever they lead astray! Lord of the winds and whatever they blow! We ask You for the good of this town and the good of the people of this town. We seek You protection from the evil of this town, from the evil of the people of this town and from the evil within it."}

Allāh informs man about everything in the heavens and the earth so that he *"may know that Allāh has power over all things and that Allāh's knowledge encompasses everything."* Nothing is beyond His knowledge and beyond His control.

سورة التحريم

Madinan	Surah At-Tahim	Verses 12

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Seeking the pleasure of your wives, why do you declare unlawful that which Allāh has made lawful for you? Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (2) Allāh has ordained that you release yourselves from your oaths. Allāh is your Protecting Friend and He is the All Knowing, the Wise.

PROHIBITION AGAINST DECLARING THINGS HĀLĀL (*LAWFUL*) AND HARĀM (*UNLAWFUL*)

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to visit each of his wives after the Asr Salāh and spend a short while with all of them. Once, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had some honey at the home of Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها consulted with each other. They decided that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم visited the first of the two, she would ask him whether he had eaten Maghāfīr (this was a type of gum that did not have a pleasant smell). When one of them did mention this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said, 'I have not had any Maghāfīr. I only had some honey with Zaynab bint Jahsh. I swear by Allāh that I shall never have any more honey again." It was then that Allāh revealed the verse: *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Seeking the pleasure of your wives, why do you declare unlawful that which Allāh has made lawful for you? Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 729*]

Because Allāh Ta'āla had made the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a role model for the Ummah, Allāh made various incidents occur in his life to teach lessons to people. One may not say that Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها deliberately wanted to hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because their action was a typical form of teasing that happens in good faith between husband and wife. Another narration of Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 793*) mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told his wife not to relate the incident to anyone else.

Allāh chides the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Seeking the pleasure of your wives, why do you declare that thing unlawful which Allāh has made lawful for you?"* Allāh Ta'āla mentioned this because it does not behove the Holy Prophet of Allāh to carry out such an action merely to please his wives. Although taking an oath is not a forbidden act, Allāh chided the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because the act was not in keeping with his lofty status. Whereas the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not regard honey as a Harām (*forbidden*) food, Allāh referred to the act as such to emphasis the fact that the act did not suit the behaviour of a Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, Allāh did forgive him, as indicated by the phrase *"Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ONCE AN OATH IS TAKEN?

Allāh states, *"Allāh has ordained that you release yourselves from your oaths."* In this verse, Allāh has added the word *"yourselves"* to indicate that the injunction applies to the entire Ummah. When a person takes an oath to do or not to do something, he has undertaken a pledge with Allāh and this pledge has to be fulfilled. There are two methods by which one may be absolved of one's oath. The first method is by carrying out the action that one vowed to carry out on condition that the act is not sinful. Alternatively, one may pay Kaffāra (*expiation*) once the oath is breached. In both cases, the oath will no longer be binding on one.

It should be borne in mind that one may take two types of oaths:

A. An oath that one will do something or that one will not do something. Such oaths are further classified into those attached by a condition and those that are unconditional.

B. The second type of oath occurs when one declares something that is Hālāl (permitted) as being Unlawful for oneself. According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه*, this type of oath necessitates Kaffāra just as Kaffāra is necessary when one breaches one's oath.*

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه narrates without a chain of narrators that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم paid the Kaffāra (*expiation*) for his oath. He also narrates from Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم freed a slave as Kaffāra.

وَإِذْ أَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَّفَ بَعْضَهُ
وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَأَكَ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَ نَبَّأَنِيَ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿٣﴾

(3) When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whispered something to one of his wives, she informed about it. When Allāh disclosed this to him, he made a part of it known and ignored a part of it. When he informed her about it, she exclaimed, "Who told you about it?" He replied, "The All Knowing, The Informed One told me."

AN INCIDENT BETWEEN THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND SOME OF HIS WIVES

Many commentators, including the author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* have mentioned that the above verse also concerns the incident of the honey. They state that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took the oath not to have honey, he told the wife that was with him at that time not to inform anyone else about the incident. When she related the story to another wife, Allāh Ta'āla informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about her act. Because of his kindness, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not relate to her exactly what she told the other wife so that she would not be embarrassed. He merely informed her that he knew she had divulged the secret and he also mentioned the name of the other wife. When he told her this, she asked in surprise, *"Who told you about it?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied *"The All Knowing and Informed One told me."*

However, many commentators narrate another incident. They state that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once in his quarters with his wife Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها when she requested permission to leave. In her absence, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم shared the bed with his slave girl Sayyidah Māriya Qibtiyya رضى الله عنها who was the mother of his son Sayyidina Ibrahīm رضى الله عنه. Returning prematurely, Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها noticed that the door was closed and realised what had happened.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم again met Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها, she complained that he had not been fair to her by using her turn with him for sharing a bed with Sayyidah Māriya رضى الله عنها. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained to her that he had acted within the law of Shari'ah because Sayyidah Māriya رضى الله عنها was his lawful slave girl. However, to please Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم declared Sayyidah Māriya رضى الله عنها unlawful for himself and told Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها not to mention the incident to anyone else. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had left, Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها gave Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها the good news that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has severed further contact with Sayyidah Māriya رضى الله عنها. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

The author of *'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that the phrase *"When the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *whispered something to one of his wives,"* refers to the time when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها that he has declared Sayyidah Māriya رضى الله عنها unlawful for himself and that she should not inform anyone else about what had transpired. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also informed Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه would be his successors as leaders of the Muslims. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم later told Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها that she had informed Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, she asked, *"Who told you about it?"* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"The All Knowing and Informed One told me."*

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها that he was aware of what she has done, he mentioned only the incident of Sayyidah Māriya رضى الله عنها and did not tell her that he also knew that she had informed Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها about the pending Caliph of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى

رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. He did not mention this because he did not want this information to spread. Allāh refers to this when He says, *"he made a part of it known and ignored a part of it."*

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه states that although the incident concerning Sayyidina Māriya Qibtiyya رضى الله عنه is not narrated in any authentic hadith, the narration is nevertheless sound and fits the context of the verse better.

In the verse to follow, Allāh Ta'āla directs both Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها to repent. If it is assumed that the verse refers to the narration concerning the honey, they are required to repent because although they did not intend to hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they nevertheless did. Therefore, they were both equally guilty. However, if it is assumed that the verse refers to the incident of Sayyidah Māriya Qibtiyya رضى الله عنها, the instruction to repent would apply to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها only if she allowed Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها to narrate the incident knowing that it was supposed to be a secret. This could well occur if, for example, Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها had approached Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها saying, *"I have to tell you a secret. Although I am not supposed to tell anyone, I will tell you because we are so close."* In such a situation, it was appropriate for Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها to refuse to listen. It is for this reason that Allāh addresses both of them in the following verse.

إِن تَتُوبَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ۖ وَإِن تَظَـٰهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَـٰلِحُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾ عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُۥٓ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن يُبْدِلَهُۥٓ أَزْوَٰجًا خَيْرًا مِّنكُنَّ مُسْلِمَـٰتٍ مُّؤْمِنَـٰتٍ قَـٰنِتَـٰتٍ تَـٰٓئِبَـٰتٍ عَـٰبِدَٰتٍ سَـٰٓئِحَـٰتٍ ثَيِّبَـٰتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا ﴿٥﴾

(4) If the two of you repent to Allāh, then your hearts have surely turned. However, if you two assist each other against him [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], then his protecting friends are Allāh, Jibr'īl and the pious believers. Besides these, the angels are also aides to him. (5) If he has to divorce all of you, then his Lord shall certainly replace you with wives better than yourselves who will be Muslims, believers, obedient, repentant, worshippers, women who fast, previously married women and virgins.

ALLĀH ADDRESSES THE WIVES OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Addressing Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, Allāh states, *"If the two of you repent to Allāh, then your hearts have surely turned"* i.e. turned back towards the best course after straying for a while. Allāh Ta'āla directed them to repent because their behaviour caused the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to take an oath that he would never again enjoy the things that he loved very much viz. honey and Sayyidah Māriya Qibtiyyah رضى الله عنها. In doing this,

they hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says further, *"However, if you two assist each other against him [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], then (you can do him no harm because) his protecting friends are Allāh, Jibr'īl and the pious believers. Besides these, the angels are also aides to him."* None can harm the person who has so many powerful beings to assist him.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that he had not yet completed asking Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه about the identities of the two women referred to in the verse *"if you two assist each other against him"*, when Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said that they were Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 731*]

Allāh Ta'āla then addresses all the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"If he has to divorce all of you, then his Lord shall certainly replace you with wives better than yourselves who will be Muslims, believers, obedient, repentant, worshippers, women who fast, previously married women and virgins."* However, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never divorced all his wives and it was not necessary for Allāh to replace them.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم PRACTISES "ĪLA"

It once occurred that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was upset with his wives and practised *"Eela"* i.e. he took an oath that he would not engage in sexual contact with them. During that period, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stayed in an upstairs room. The news spread among the companions of prophet *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had divorced his wives. Sayyidina Umar **رضى الله عنه** first approached Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, his daughter Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها before approaching the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to verify the matter. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه was already with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه arrived. Sayyidina Umar **رضى الله عنه** said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Why should you be perturbed by women? If you divorce them, then Allāh, Jibril, Mika'īl, myself Abu Bakr and all the believers are with you." Confirming the words of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, Allāh revealed the verse, *"However, if you two assist each other against him [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], then his protecting friends are Allāh, Jibril and the pious believers. Besides these, the angels are also aides to him. If he has to divorce all of you, then his Lord shall certainly replace you with wives better than yourselves who will be Muslims, believers, obedient, repentant, worshippers, women who fast, previously married women and virgins."*

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه also informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم were sitting in the Masjid thinking that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had divorced his Wives. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم denied that he had divorced them, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه requested permission to inform the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم accordingly. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, "You may tell them if you please."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then left the room to resume contact with his wives. When Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he had left the room on the 29th day whereas he had taken an oath not to

have contact with his wives for a month, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her that the month had consisted of 29 days. [*Muslim Pgs. 478-482*]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ
غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِى ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِىَّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَٰنِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَآ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ جَٰهِدِ ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمْ
جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٩﴾

(6) O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from the Fire, the fuel of which is people and stones. Harsh and strong angels are appointed over it who never disobey what Allāh commands them and who carry out exactly what they have been instructed. (7) "O you who disbelieve! Do not make excuses today. You are being punished only for what you have perpetrated." (8) O you who believe! Sincerely repent to Allāh. Soon your Lord shall expiate your sins and enter you into gardens beneath which rivers flow. On that day Allāh shall not disgrace the Holy Prophet and the believers with him. Their light shall travel ahead of them and on their right-hand side. They will say, "O our Lord! Perpetuate our light for us and forgive us. Verily You have power over everything." (9) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be stern with them. Their abode is Hell. What an evil abode indeed!

THE COMMAND TO SAVE ONESELF AND ONE'S FAMILY FROM HELL

Addressing the believers, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from the Fire, the fuel of which is people and stones."* Whereas the heat of this world's fires fuelled by wood, oil, gas, etc is unbearable, the fire of Hell which is fuelled by people and stones is much more intense. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the fire of Hell is 69 times more intense than the fire of this world. [*""Mishkāt""* p. 242]

Common sense demands that we should make every effort to rescue ourselves and our families from this inferno. This can be achieved by ensuring that we do not disobey Allāh's commands and that our families also do not do so. In addition to this, we should educate them about the injunctions of the Shari'ah and ensure that they practise all of these diligently. While most people

realise that they have to provide for the physical needs of their families, few realise that they are also obliged to save their families from the fire of Hell. It is for this reason that Allāh expressly instructs people to tend to this matter. This command also includes ensuring that our families eat only that which is Hālāl (*lawful*) and that we feed them only Hālāl foods.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The flesh nourished by Unlawful shall never enter Heaven and Hell is more deserving of such flesh."* Filling the bellies of one's family with Unlawful food is a great injustice because it will plunge them into Hell. One should also make every effort to educate one's family about the injunctions of Religion because practice is impossible without knowledge. Deeds carried out without the relevant knowledge will be defective and may also lead one to destruction in the Ākhirah (*Hereafter*).

"Durrul Manthūr" narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that the *"stones" that will be the fuel for Hell refer to brimstone (sulphur)"*. One can well imagine the intensity of a raging fire that is further fuelled by a substance as flammable as sulphur. One should be aware of the horror of Hell and also makes one's family aware of the same.

Concerning the angels in charge of Hell, Allāh says, *"Harsh and strong angels are appointed over it who never disobey what Allāh commands them and who carry out exactly what they have been instructed."* A person in Hell therefore has no hope of ever convincing the warders of Hell to allow them to escape.

Allāh then mentions what the disbelievers will be told on the Day of Judgment. When they will make various excuses for their evil behaviour, it will be said to them, *"O you who disbelieve! Do not make excuses today. (You were warned in the world but you falsified Allāh's messengers and the coming of Judgment day. Therefore, do not grieve or complain because) You are being punished only for what you have perpetrated."*

Allāh then instructs the believers to repent for their sins and He extols the virtues of Tauba (repentance). Allāh says, *"O you who believe! Sincerely repent to Allāh. Soon your Lord shall expiate your sins and enter you into gardens beneath which rivers flow." "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* quotes Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه who says that the *"Taubatan Nasūha'* (sincere repentance) referred to in the verse is that repentance after which a person does not return to the sin he repented for, just as milk never returns to the udders. According to Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه, "Taubatan Nasūha" means that one should truly regret one's sin and make *a* resolution never to repeat the sin.

Allāh then conveys glad tidings to the believers when He says that on the Day of Judgment, *"Allāh shall not disgrace the Holy Prophet and the believers with him."* It shall be only the disbelievers who will suffer humiliation on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"Today humiliation and misfortune are certainly upon the disbelievers!"* [*Surah 16, verse 27*]

Because *"the believers with him"* refer to those believers with perfect Belief, one may not object by saying that sinful believers will suffer some disgrace on the Day of Judgment when they will have to suffer a while in Hell. An additional

bounty that the believers shall enjoy on the Day of Judgment will be that *"Their light shall travel ahead of them and on their right-hand side."* They will have perfect light when crossing the bridge of Sirāt and will be able to cross it easily without falling into Hell.

On the Day of Judgment, the believers will pray to Allāh saying, *"O our Lord! Perpetuate our light for us and forgive us. Verily You have power over everything."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی اللہ عنہ mentioned that the believers will make this supplication when they will notice that the light of the hypocrites will be extinguished, causing them to plunge into darkness. The hypocrites will then try to benefit from the light of the believers but will fall behind them.

THE COMMAND TO WAGE JIHĀD AGAINST THE DISBELIEVERS AND HYPOCRITES

Allāh instructs, *"O the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be stem with them. Their abode is Hell. What an evil abode indeed!"* Allāma Qurtubi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ states that this verse instructs the Muslims to wage Jihād against the disbelievers and to make it clear to the hypocrites that they are headed for doom in the Hereafter where they will be plunged into darkness and eventually into Hell. According to Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, *"be stern with them"* refers to enforcing capital punishment against the hypocrites because they were guilty of deeds that deserved this.

In my humble opinion, *"be stern with them"* refers to calling the hypocrites out by name and banning them from the Masjid of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, as the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم eventually did.

ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱمْرَأَتَ نُوحٍ وَٱمْرَأَتَ لُوطٍ ۖ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ
مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَٰلِحَيْنِ فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا وَقِيلَ ٱدْخُلَا
ٱلنَّارَ مَعَ ٱلدَّٰخِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱمْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ
قَالَتْ رَبِّ ٱبْنِ لِى عِندَكَ بَيْتًا فِى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِى مِن فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِۦ وَنَجِّنِى مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَرْيَمَ ٱبْنَتَ عِمْرَٰنَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِن
رُّوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَكَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

(10) For the disbelievers Allāh draws the parallel of the wife of Nūh علیہ السلام and the wife of Lūt علیہ السلام. They were both in the marriage of two pious men of My bondsmen but they betrayed them. So they were of no assistance to their wives against Allāh and the two (women) were told, "Enter the Fire with those entering." (11) For the believers, Allāh draws the parallel of the wife of phara'oh (Fir'oun) when she said, "O my Lord! Build for me a home by You in Heaven and save me from phara'oh (Fir'oun), from his deeds and save me from the oppressive nation." (12) (For the believers, Allāh also draws the parallel of)

Maryam the daughter of Imrān who guarded her chastity and into whom We blew Our spirit. She believed in the words of her Lord, in His scriptures and she was among the obedient.

THE WIVES OF SAYYIDINA NŪH AND LŪT عليه السلام WERE DISBELIEVERS WHILE THE WIFE OF PHARA'OH *(FIR'OUN)* AND SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام WERE BELIEVERS

The above verses describe two women who clung to disbelief despite being married to Prophets عليهم السلام. They also speak about a woman who believed despite being married to one of the worst disbelievers. The two Prophets عليهم السلام who married disbelieving women were Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. While it was permissible in their Shari'ah to marry such women. Our Shari'ah allows men to marry only Muslim women and women who belong to the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of Book*).

Just as one of the sons of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام did not believe even after witnessing Allāh's punishment before him, the wife of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام also refused to accept his message despite spending her life with him. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that she used to say that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام was insane.

As numerous verses of the Qur'ān mention, the nation of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام perpetrated the unnatural act of homosexuality. Despite his tireless efforts to reform them, the people refused to listen. His wife also assisted them in their ways by informing them whenever Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام had guests so that they could carry out their vile act with the guests. Whenever some guest arrived at his house, she would light a fire. Seeing the light and smoke, the people were informed about the arrival of the guests, while the guests and Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام thought that it was a sign of welcoming the guests. The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* mentions that the phrase *"they betrayed them"* refers to Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام wife calling him insane and Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام wife calling the people to sodomise his guests.

Because these two ladies died as disbelievers, they will be made to enter Hell with the rest of the disbelievers despite their relationship with great Prophets عليهم السلام. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes (*v. 4 p. 368*) that this verse serves as a warning to sinful people and disbelievers who think that they will attain salvation merely by associating with pious people. The good company will not save them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* if they continue sinning and violating Allāh's commands.

The first of the two believing women that Allāh mentions is the wife of phara'oh *(Fir'oun)*. Whenever people believed in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* would torture them most severely. It is reported that he used to make them lie on the ground and then hammer tent pegs through their hands. It is for this reason that he is referred to as *'The man of pegs"* in Surah Sād and in Surah Fajr. *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه that phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* also had pegs nailed into his wife's hands and feet. When this was done, the angels shaded her and she made the supplication, *"O my Lord! Build for me a home by You in Heaven."*

Allāh then showed her a vision of her home in Heaven. She continued, '*save me from phara'oh (Fir'oun), from his deeds and save me from the oppressive nation*" i.e. from those who carry out phara'oh's *(Fir'oun's)* instructions and who harass the believers.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" mentions that she made the supplication when phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* instructed his men to place a heavy rock on her chest. Allāh then showed her house in Heaven which was made of pearl. While looking at this vision, her soul departed. The rock was placed on her body after her soul had already departed and she therefore felt no pain. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Ibn Kaysān رحمة الله عليه state that Allāh raised her to Heaven where she is given food and drink. And Allāh knows best.

The women whose virtues the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has extolled are:

1. *Sayyidah Khadīja* رضى الله عنها
2. *Sayyidah Maryam* عليها السلام
3. *Sayyidah Fātima* رضى الله عنها
4. *Sayyidah Ayshah* رضى الله عنها
5. *Sayyidah Āsiyah* رضى الله عنها, *who was Fir'oun's wife*

In a hadith of Bukhari (*v. 1 p. 532*), the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentions that while many men have reached spiritual perfection, among women there were Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and Sayyidah Āsiyah رضى الله عنها who achieved this perfection. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added that the excellence of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها over people is like the excellence of Tharīd over other types of food.

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام was the mother of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Much has been mentioned about her in Surah Āl Imrān [*Surah 3, verses 33-51*], Surah Maryam [*Surah 19, verses 16-36*] and Surah Anbiya [*Surah 21, verse 91*]. Because Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was born without a father, the Jews accused Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام of fornication. Allāh announces her innocence when He says, *"Maryam the daughter of Imrān who guarded her chastity and into whom We blew Our spirit."* Allāh sent Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام to blow into the collar of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, causing her to conceive. It was not long after this that she gave birth to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. The details of this have been discussed in the commentary of verses 16-36 of Surah Maryam (*Surah 19*).

Allāh describes her further 'when He says, *"She believed in the words of her Lord, in His scriptures and she was among the obedient."* According to the laws of Arabic grammar, the word *"Qānitīn* "(translated above as *"obedient")* should read *"Qānitāt"* (obedient women). Among other interpretations, Scholars mention that the verse is phrased as it is to indicate that her obedience to Allāh matched those of many saintly men. This is perhaps why the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that while many men have reached spiritual perfection, among women there were Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and Sayyidah Āsiyah رضى الله عنها who achieved this perfection.

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Para Twenty-Nine

سورة الملك

Makkan	Surah Al-Mulk	Verses 30

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

تَبَٰرَكَ ٱلَّذِي بِيَدِهِ ٱلۡمُلۡكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٌ ﴿1﴾ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلۡمَوۡتَ وَٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ لِيَبۡلُوَكُمۡ
أَيُّكُمۡ أَحۡسَنُ عَمَلٗاۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡغَفُورُ ﴿2﴾ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبۡعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٖ طِبَاقٗاۖ مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي
خَلۡقِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ مِن تَفَٰوُتٖۖ فَٱرۡجِعِ ٱلۡبَصَرَ هَلۡ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٖ ﴿3﴾ ثُمَّ ٱرۡجِعِ ٱلۡبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيۡنِ
يَنقَلِبۡ إِلَيۡكَ ٱلۡبَصَرُ خَاسِئٗا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٞ ﴿4﴾ وَلَقَدۡ زَيَّنَّا ٱلسَّمَآءَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا بِمَصَٰبِيحَ وَجَعَلۡنَٰهَا
رُجُومٗا لِّلشَّيَٰطِينِۖ وَأَعۡتَدۡنَا لَهُمۡ عَذَابَ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿5﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Most Exalted is the Being in Whose control is all sovereignty and Who has power over everything. (2) He has created death and life to test which of you carry out the best deeds. He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving. (3) He has created the seven heavens in layers. You will not see any inconsistency in Allāh's creation. Look again. Do you see any cracks? (4) Look again and once again and your gaze will return embarrassed and exhausted. (5) Indeed we have beautified the nearest sky with lanterns and have made them a means of pelting the Satan. We have prepared for them the punishment of the Blaze.

ALLĀH HAS CREATED LIFE AND DEATH AS A TEST

The above verses discuss Allāh's grandeur and the control that He wields over the universe. Various aspects are discussed.

First. Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"Most Exalted is the Being in Whose control is all sovereignty."* The entire universe and everything within the universe are in Allāh's control and everything belongs to Him. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Yāsīn, *"Pure is that Being in Whose hand lies the reins of everything."* [*Surah 36, verse 83*]

Second. *"He has power over everything."*

Third. *"He has created death and life to test who of you carry out the best deeds."* People come into the world, live for a while and eventually leave once death comes to them. Allāh has not made man's life and death a futile exercise. There is great wisdom in this. Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"Does man think that he will be left to be?"* Allāh has not created man in vain. Allāh gave man life and has revealed certain orders and injunctions that man has to carry out. The more good deeds a person does, the better person will he be. Once one dies, one will be rewarded according to the amount of good deeds that one carried out and one will be punished for one's sins if Allāh does not forgive them. Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"Did you think that We had created you in vain and that you would not return to Us?"* Much has been discussed in this regard in the commentary of verse 7 of Surah Hūd (Surah 11), where Allāh says, *"to test who of you performs better deeds."*

Fourth. *"He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving."* Nothing is beyond Allāh's control. His might is such that none can escape Him if He wishes to punish anyone. At the same time, He is also Most Forgiving and none can prevent His mercy and forgiveness from reaching whoever He wills.

Fifth. *"He has created the seven heavens in layers."*

Sixth. Addressing every person reciting the Qur'ān, Allāh says, *"You will not see any inconsistency in Allāh 's creation."* If one glances at the sky, one will not be able to see fissures in it, as Allāh says in Surah Qāf, *"Have they not looked at the sky above them and seen how We have made it, beautified it and that it has no cracks."* Despite the absence of any pillars supporting the skies, no sky and no sphere falls on another and they all maintain their distance from each other. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the distance between each of the seven skies is a journey of five hundred years. [*"Mishkāt" p. 510 from Ahmad and Tirmidhi*]

Seventh. Allāh again addresses the reader of the Qur'ān saying, *"Look again. Do you see any cracks? Look again and once again i.e. ponder deeply into the matter. After exhaustive deliberation, you will find that there are no defects in Allāh's creation and 'your gaze will return embarrassed and exhausted."* One will be embarrassed because one will not have found what one intended to find.

Eighth. *"Indeed we have beautified the nearest sky with lanterns."* These lanterns refer to the stars, as mentioned in Surah Sāffāt where Allāh says, *"Verily, We decorated the sky of this world with the adornment of the stars."* The beauty that the twinkling stars lend to the night sky is no secret to people who appreciate beauty.

Ninth. Allāh says that He has made the stars *"a means of pelting the Satan."* When the Satan attempt to eavesdrop on the conversations of the angels, the angels chase them away by pelting with stars. It is not necessary for an entire star to be displaced to pelt a Satan because a part of a star may also be used for this purpose. Referring to this in Surah Hijr, Allāh says that for the Satan *"who steals a hearing, a clear flame pursues him."*

Tenth. *"We have prepared for them (the Satan) the punishment of the Blaze."* The Satan are themselves disbelievers and they also influence man to disbelieve in Allāh and in His Prophets عليهم السلام. If someone does not fall prey to their guiles

and becomes a believer, they entice him to lead a life of sin. They ascend to the heavens in an attempt to hear the future events that the angels are discussing. It is then that the angels pelt them with the stars. While many of them die when the star strikes them, others become insane. Those who hear something minor and manage to escape the hurtling star, convey the message to fortune-tellers after adding hundreds of lies to it. They do this so that people may have faith in fortune-tellers and turn away from belief. For more details, refer to the commentaries of Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 16-18*], Surah Nahl [*Surah 16, verse 16*] and Surah Sāffāt [*Surah 37, verses 6-10*].

NOTE: It appears from the verse *"created death and life"* that life and death are physical phenomena. Death is actually the absence of life. Therefore, since death involves the extraction of the soul, it is not difficult to understand it as a physical occurrence.

وَلِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٦﴾ إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ﴿٧﴾ تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۖ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ ﴿٩﴾ وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١٠﴾ فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذَنْبِهِمْ فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١١﴾

(6) The punishment of Hell shall be for those who disbelieve in their Lord and it is indeed an evil place to return to. (7) When they are thrown into it, they will hear it roar as it rages. (8) It will seem as if it is about to burst out of fury. Each time a group is thrown into it, its keeper will ask, "Did a warner not come to you?" (9) They will reply, "Certainly, a warner surely came to us but we denied and said, 'Allāh had not revealed anything. You are merely in great deviation."' (10) They will also say, "If we had listened or understood, we would not be among the inmates of the Blaze." (11) So they will admit their sins. May the inmates of the Blaze be distanced!

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL SUFFER THE FURY OF HELL AND ADMIT THEIR WRONG

Whereas the verse preceding the above verses mentioned that the Satan will suffer the punishment of the *"Blaze"* (Hell), the above verses describe the plight of the disbelievers in the very same Hell. Allāh states, *"The punishment of Hell shall be for those who disbelieve in their Lord and it is indeed an evil place to return to. When they are thrown into it, they will hear it roar as it rages.* "Hell will be raging so violently that *'it will seem as if it is about to burst out of fury."* Hell will be angry with the disbelievers. Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"When it (Hell) will see them from a distance, they will hear the roar of its fury and its crackling."*

Allāh says further, *"Each time a group is thrown into it, its keeper will*

(rebukingly) ask, "(How did you end up here?) Did a warner not come to you?" i.e. did a messenger of Allāh عليه السلام not warn you about the consequences of rejecting Oneness of Allah? The disbelievers will reply. *"Certainly, a warner surely came to us but we denied and said, 'Allāh had not revealed anything. You are merely in great deviation."*

Expressing their remorse, the disbelievers will then say to the keeper of Hell, *"If we had listened or understood, we would not be among the inmates of the Blaze."*

In this manner, *"they will admit their sins."* They will confess that they were at fault by rejecting the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh says, *"May the inmates of the Blaze be distanced (forever from Allāh 's mercy)!"*

(12) Indeed those who fear their Lord without seeing Him shall have forgiveness and a great reward. (13) Speak secretly or openly, verily He has knowledge of the secrets of the heart. (14) Does the One Who created not know, when He has knowledge of intricacies and is Informed?

FORGIVENESS AND A GRAND REWARD FOR THOSE WHO FEAR ALLĀH

The first of the above three verses mentions the virtue of the people of Belief and the virtue of carrying out good deeds and abstaining from evil. In contrast to the disbelievers who will suffer the punishment of the *"Blaze"*, the believers will enjoy *'forgiveness and a great reward."*

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Speak secretly or openly."* Whether a person says something to another person openly or whether he entertains a thought in his heart, Allāh has knowledge of everything because *"Verily, He has knowledge of the secrets of the heart.* "Allāh is Aware of every false belief in a person's heart. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports that then Polytheists (*one who ascribe unto Allāh*) of Makkah used to say, *"Speak in secrecy so that the Lord of Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *does not hear."* It was in response to this that Allāh revealed this verse.

"Does the One Who created not know, when He has knowledge of intricacies and is Informed?" Since Allāh has created everything, it is obvious that He has knowledge of everything. It makes no difference whether His creation speaks and acts openly or in secrecy, Allāh has knowledge of everything they say or do Since Allāh has knowledge of everything, people say and do, he will certainly be able to take them to task for their wrong and will reward them for the good they do.

ءَأَمِنتُم مَّن فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَن يَخۡسِفَ بِكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ﴿١٦﴾ أَمۡ أَمِنتُم مَّن فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَن يُرۡسِلَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ حَاصِبٗاۖ فَسَتَعۡلَمُونَ كَيۡفَ نَذِيرِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَقَدۡ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾ أَوَلَمۡ يَرَوۡاْ إِلَى ٱلطَّيۡرِ فَوۡقَهُمۡ صَٰٓفَّٰتٖ وَيَقۡبِضۡنَۚ مَا يُمۡسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءِۭ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

(15) It is He Who subjugated the earth for you so walk on its roads and eat from His sustenance. To Him shall you be resurrected (16) Do you have no fear that He in the heavens will cause the earth to swallow you up after which it should quake? (17) Or do you have no fear that He in the heavens should send a devastating windstorm against you? Soon you shall come to know how My warnings are. (18) Verily those before them denied, so how (devastating) was My punishment? (19) Have they not seen the birds above them spreading their wings out and folding them in? It is Only The Merciful Who keeps them suspended in the air. Verily He is Watchful over everything.

IS MAN FEARLESS OF ALLĀH WHEN ALLĀH HAS THE POWER TO PUNISH HIM AT ANY TIME?

These verses speak about Allāh's power to create and to sustain His creation. Allāh says, *'it is He Who subjugated the earth for you."* Allāh has granted man the ability to exploit the resources of the earth. Man can dig into the ground to lay foundations for his buildings; he digs wells; he ploughs the fields to sow his crops and derives various types of benefit from the earth. Allāh says, *'so walk on its roads."* Allāh allows man to travel on earth so that he can transport himself and his goods from town to town and from country to country. In this manner, people can have food from different places. Allāh tells man that he may *"eat from His sustenance"* Every type of food that the earth yields and whatever it does not yield is from Allāh and it is through these types of provisions that Allāh sustains His creation.

However, Allāh reminds man that enjoying the bounties He gives in this world is not everything. Together with using Allāh's bounties, man must bear in mind that he will soon have to leave this world for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. He will then be placed beneath the surface of the earth and later resurrected when the trumpet is blown to signal the advent of Judgment Day. Man will then face Allāh and will be required to account for everything he did in this world. Therefore, man should enjoy Allāh's bounties and not forget to express gratitude and to utilise the bounties in a manner pleasing to Allāh. To remind man of this, Allāh states, *"To Him shall you be resurrected."*

Allāh then reminds man that he ought to accept the teachings of His Prophets عليهم السلام because failure to do so could attract Allāh's punishment from the earth and from the sky. Allāh says, *"Do you have no fear that He (Whose commands are issued) in the heavens will cause the earth to swallow you up after which it should quake?"* Allāh can create large chasms in the earth's surface and cause entire communities to be plunged into them as the earth convulses. Man will

then be punished by the same earth which Allāh had made subservient to him. Just as Allāh is Capable of punishing man using the earth, Allāh can also punish him using the atmosphere above the earth. Allāh says, *"Or do you have no fear that He in the heavens should send a devastating windstorm against you?"* Although the air in the atmosphere is usually calm, Allāh has the power to make it blow so fast that it can lift man and machine and fling them far off, destroying them totally. Such punishment struck former nations like the Ād and also occur in many parts of today's world.

Allāh continues, *"Soon you shall come to know how My warnings are."* The disbelievers will realise the truth of the warnings of punishment that the Prophets عليهم السلام sounded when Allāh's punishment strikes them in this world. If Allāh does not choose to punish them in this world, they will certainly suffer the consequences of their sins in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Verily those before them denied, so how (devastating) was My punishment?"* Every person should take a lesson from the punishment that seized former nations and they should take precautions not to fall into the same predicament.

Allāh then describes His great power when He asks, *"Have they not seen the birds above them spreading their wings out and folding them in? It is only the Merciful Who keeps them suspended in the air. Verily He is Watchful over everything."* Whether the birds have their wings spread wide apart or whether their wings are folded beneath them, they are able to stay in the air by the command of Allāh. It is only Allāh Who allows birds and other creatures to fly because if the same wings were given to man or to other creatures, they would be unable to fly without Allāh's will.

In these opening verses of Surah Mulk, Allāh has made it clear that He wields power in the heavens, on earth and in the space between the two. His supremacy in the heavens is indicated by the verse, *"Indeed we have beautified the nearest sky with lanterns..."*. His control over the earth is implied in the verse *"It is He Who subjugated the earth for you..."* and His sovereignty in everything between the heavens and the earth is mentioned in the verse *"Have they not seen the birds above them..."*

(20) Besides Rahmān (the Merciful), who can be your army to assist you? Indeed, the disbelievers are in deception. (21) Who can give you sustenance if He Who sustains you stops providing for you? However, they adamantly continue their rebellion and enmity.

WHO BESIDES RAHMĀN (THE MERCIFUL) CAN ASSIST YOU AND PROVIDE FOR YOU?

Allāh speaks about the assistance and sustenance that He provides for mankind. Commentators state that the disbelievers who refused to respond to the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took pride in two things. The first

was that they had wealth and a strong clan who could protect them from harm. The second was that they believed that they had plenty of idols who would protect them from harm. Allāh refutes both these beliefs when he says, *"Besides The Merciful, who can be your army to assist you?"* If Allāh's punishment has to overtake any nation, none but Allāh can rescue them from it. However, *"the disbelievers are in deception"*. Satan has deceived the polytheists into believing that their idols, their wealth and their tribes will assist them.

Allāh says further, *"Who can give you sustenance if He Who sustains you stops providing for you?"* It is obvious that if Allāh stops providing for anyone, none will be able to offer relief *"However, they adamantly continue their rebellion and enmity."* Despite the various proofs that are presented to them, the disbelievers remain undeterred in their rebellious attitude and continue to harbour enmity for the Muslims and for Islām.

أَفَمَن يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِۦٓ أَهْدَىٰٓ أَمَّن يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ (22) قُلْ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ (23) قُلْ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى ذَرَأَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ (24)

(22) Is the one who walks upside down on his face more rightly guided or he who walks upright on the straight path? (23) Say, "It is Allāh Who created you and gave you ears, eyes and hearts. Little is the gratitude that you show." (24) Say, "It is Allāh Who spread you out on earth and it is to Him that you shall be gathered."

CAN THE PERSON WALKING UPSIDE DOWN BE LIKE THE ONE WALKING UPRIGHT?

Allāh draws an analogy of the disbeliever and the believer. Allāh says, *"Is the one who walks upside down on his face (i.e. the disbeliever) more rightly guided or he who walks upright on the straight path (i.e. the believer)?"* It is obvious that the person walking upright faces no danger of falling because he can see perfectly and has control over himself. In addition to this, he is treading a path that is straight and which poses no danger to the person walking.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO ALLĀH FOR ONE'S LIMBS

Expressing the favours he bestowed on man, Allāh says, *"Say, 'It is Allāh Who created you (when you were nothing) and (in addition to creating you, Allāh) gave you ears, eyes and hearts."* Besides these invaluable parts of the body, Allāh has also blessed man with other great bounties in his body. It is therefore proper for man to express his heartfelt gratitude to Allāh. It is necessary for every human to express this gratitude in word and in deed. However, Allāh anticipates man's ingratitude when he says, *"Little is the gratitude that you show."*

Allāh Ta'āla has created the means for man to utilise his senses and faculties of perception. Allāh has placed the faculty of hearing in the ears, the faculty of seeing in eyes, the faculty of tasting in the tongue, the faculty of smelling in the

Allāh says in Surah Abas, *"On that Day many faces will be dusty, covered in darkness. These will be the sinful disbelievers."* [*Surah 80, verses 40-42*]

Referring to this scene, Allāh says, *"When they will see it (Judgment Day) approaching close, the faces of the disbelievers will contort and it will be said, 'This is what you used to ask for."* When Judgment Day will take place, the disbelievers will be reminded of how they used to ask for it. They will then regret what they did when they witness the punishment in store for them.

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكَنِيَ ٱللَّهُ وَمَن مَّعِيَ أَوْ رَحِمَنَا فَمَن يُجِيرُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ قُلْ هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَآؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَن يَأْتِيكُم بِمَآءٍ مَّعِينٍۭ ﴿٣٠﴾

(28) Say, "Tell me. If Allāh destroys me and everyone with me or showers mercy on us, who can save the disbelievers from a painful punishment?" (29) Say, "He is Ar Rahmān. We believe in Him and trust in Him. Soon you shall come to know who is in clear deviation." (30) Say, "Tell me. If your water sinks to the depths of the earth, who can provide you with pure water?"

WHO IS THERE FOR YOU IF ALLĀH FORSAKES YOU?

In the first of the above verses Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to say to his enemies that instead of wasting their time wishing for some calamity to afflict him and his companions, they should rather worry about their own plight when they will have to suffer the punishment for their disbelief. It makes no difference to the Muslims whether Allāh grants them death or allows them to live, they shall benefit in either situation. In fact, their condition in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is much better than all the wealth of this world.

Thereafter, Allāh instructs, *"Say, 'He is Ar Rahmān. We believe in Him and trust in Him. (We expect every good from Him and are convinced that we are rightly guided However, you refuse to believe this. Therefore) Soon you shall come to know who is in clear deviation.'"* When Allāh decides to punish the disbelievers either in this world or in the Hereafter, they will realise that they were on the wrong and that the Muslims were right. However, then it will be too late.

Allāh continues, *"Say, 'Tell me. If your water sinks to the depths of the earth, who can provide you with pure water?"* Allāh reminds mankind that He has made pure water accessible to them by placing the water in rivers, wells, dams and lakes. Taking the water from these sources, man is able to fulfil his necessities. In the above verse, Allāh tells mankind that if He willed, He could make the water sink to the depths of the earth so that mankind will be unable to reach it. Then, Allāh asks, who can provide the water?

The author of *"Jalālain"* writes that after reciting this verse, the reader of the Qur'ān should say, *"Allāhu Rabbal Ālamīn"* i.e. only Allāh, the Lord of the universe can provide the water. He writes further that in reply to the question *"Tell me. If your water sinks to the depths of the earth, who can provide you with pure*

water?" some proud people said, *"Pickaxes and spades will provide the water."* Allāh Ta'āla then removed the fluid from their eyes, causing their eyes to dry up completely. This was to teach them a lesson that it is Allāh who provides the water in their eyes. Once this is removed, they should try to get it back with the pickaxes and spades they boasted about.

THE VIRTUES OF SURAH MULK

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is a Surah in the Qur'ān comprising thirty verses. It interceded on behalf of a person until he was forgiven. The Surah is 'Tabāra Kalladhi Biyadihil Mulk' (Surah Mulk)." *["Mishkāt" p. 186 from Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawūd, Nasa'ī and Ibn Majah]*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that a Sahābi [*companion (of prophet)*]رضى الله عنه pitched his tent on a spot without realising that there lay a grave there. From the grave he heard someone reciting *'Tabāra Kalladhi Biyadihil Mulk'* (Surah Mulk) until he had completed the entire Surah. The Sahābi [*companion (of prophet)*]رضى الله عنه related the entire episode to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, who said, *"This Surah prevents punishment. It offered protection from Allāh 's punishment to the person in the grave."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 188 from Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Dārmi*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that Rasulullāh (*prophet*) صلى الله عليه وسلم would not sleep until he had recited Surah Alif Lām Mīm Tanzīl (Surah Sajdah, the 32nd Surah of the Qur'ān) and *"Tabāra Kalladhi Biyadihil Mulk"* (*Surah Mulk*).

سورة القلم

Makkan	Surah Al-Qalam	Verses 52

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful

(1) Nūn. By the oath of the pen and what the angels write! (2) By the grace of your Lord, you are certainly not insane. (3) Indeed, you shall have a reward that never comes to an end. (4) Verily, you have an exalted character. (5) Soon you shall see and they will also see... (6) ...who of you is insane. (7) Indeed only your Lord knows best who deviates from His path and only He knows those who are rightly guided.

ALLĀH TELLS THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم THAT HIS CHARACTER IS MOST LOFTY AND THAT HIS REWARDS SHALL NEVER END

The Surah begins with the letter *"Nūn" (the* 25th letter of the Arabic alphabet), which is from among the Hurūf Muqatta'āt. Only Allāh knows the meanings of the Hurūf Muqatta'āt. Taking an oath by the pen and by those angels who record the deeds of people, Allāh asserts that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is certainly not insane (as the polytheists claimed). Having no excuse to refute the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, all the polytheists could say was that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was (Allāh forbid!) insane.

Commentators state that *"the pen"* in the above verse refers to the pen that Allāh created initially and which He commanded to write down everything that was to occur in the future. Sayyidina Ubāda bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh first created the pen. He then commanded the pen to write. When the pen asked what it should write, Allāh Ta'āla told it to write everything that has been predestined. The pen then wrote everything that was to occur in the future. Other commentators are of the opinion that *"the pen"* refers to all pens including the one mentioned above.

Allāh Ta'āla states, *"Nūn. By the oath of the pen and what the angels write! By the grace of your Lord, you are certainly not insane."* Through His grace and benevolence, Allāh Ta'āla had made the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a prophet and blessed him with many bounties. It is not possible for a person with such perfect blessings to be insane. The things that Allāh swears oaths by are also witnesses. Therefore, in these verses, Allāh tells man that he should study the history of the world as has been recorded. In doing so, he will realise that a person as great as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cannot be insane. It is impossible for an insane person to possess such a lofty personality and to be as perfect as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, Allāh says, *"Indeed, you shall have a reward that never comes to an end*. Because he continuously invited people to Oneness of Allah and bore the hardships that people gave him, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was entitled to great rewards in the Hereafter. Allāh also tells him, *"Verily, you are upon an exalted character."* This verse praises the personality of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and also refutes the allegation of the disbelievers that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was insane. The incidents mentioned in the books of Ahadīth bear testimony to the excellent character of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In, fact, even the Torah testified to this, as mentioned in the commentary of verse 45 of Surah Ahzāb (Surah 33).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also taught his Ummah excellent character. The "Mu'atta" of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"I have been sent to perfect noble character."*

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Good character will be the heaviest thing on a believer's scale of good deeds on the Day of Judgment. Allāh detests the rude and foul-mouthed person."* [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned that he loved most the person with the best character. He also mentioned that those with the best character have the most perfect Belief. [*"Mishkāt" p. 431*]

When one of her students asked Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها about the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم conduct at home, she mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم assisted in the domestic work and then left when it was time for Salāh. She also mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never hit any woman nor any slave. He fought only when in Jihād. He would never take revenge for any harm to him personally and would punish only those who violated Allāh's laws. [*Muslim*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was never vulgar, never pretended to be vulgar and he never shouted in the marketplace. He never responded to evil by using evil but always forgave and overlooked. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that in the ten years that he spent as an assistant to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he was never scolded for anything he did wrong. If any of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives had to scold Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would tell them to leave him alone because whatever happens has been predestined. [*"Mishkāt" p.*

519]

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه also mentioned that whenever someone shook hands with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he never turned away from the person until the person himself turned away. He also mentioned that he never saw the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sit with his legs stretched out towards another person. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hārith رضی الله عنه says that he never saw any person smile more than the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*"Mishkāt" p. 520*]

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضی الله عنه narrates that when he placed his foot into the stirrup of his animal as he was leaving for Yemen, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him, *"Display your best character with people."*[*Mālik*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Verily with good character, a believer can reach the status of those who spend their nights in Ibādah and their days in fasting."* [*Abu Dawūd*]

Allāh continues, *"Soon you shall see and they will also see who of you is insane."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه states that on the Day of Judgment those who called the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a madman will realise that they were the mad ones to refer to him as such. Other commentators state that the disbelievers will realise this in this world when they see the rapid spread of Islām and how people who were once enemies of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم become Muslims and are prepared to give their lives for him. On the other hand, his opponents who are not guided become disgraced and defeated. The Battle of Badr clearly showed them that those who called the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a madman were madmen themselves. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 29 p. 29*]

"Indeed only your Lord knows best who deviates from His path and only He knows those who are rightly guided". Allāh will therefore reward or punish people accordingly.

(8) So do not obey those who deny. (9) They wish that you would compromise and then they would compromise. (10) Do not obey every person who excessively swears on oath, who is disgraced... (11) ...who searches for the faults of others, who excels in carrying tales... (12) who vehemently prevents good, who transgresses, is sinful... (13) harsh and whose lineage is uncertain as well. (14) All because he has wealth and Sons. (15) When Our verses are recited to him, he says, "These are fables of the old men." (16) We shall soon brand him on his snout.

DO NOT OBEY THOSE WHO REJECT THE DĪN (*RELIGION*) AND DO NOT COMPROMISE ISLĀM

Allāh says, *"So do not obey those who deny. They wish that you would compromise and then they would compromise."* It has always been the practice of the enemies of Islām that they will never concede the truth but they would want the Muslims first to accept their religions. When this fails, they invite the Muslims to compromise the teachings of Islām, claiming that they will then also reduce their opposition. In the above verse, Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to fall for this trap of the disbelievers. He should not compromise the Religion of Allāh and should continue preaching the message of Islām as he had been doing.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the polytheists of Makkah told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if he stopped speaking ill of their idols they would stop opposing him. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse. This verse makes it clear that it is not permissible to forsake the truth to please people.

TEN REPREHENSIBLE TRAITS OF A DISBELIEVER

Allāh continues to describe ten evil characteristics of a particular disbeliever and tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to obey this person. Commentators state that the person referred to in these verses is Walīd bin Mughiera, who was one of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم worst enemies. Allāh Ta'āla describes him as a person:

1. *"who excessively swears on oath"*

2. *"who is disgraced"*

3. *"who searches for the faults of others" and frequently backbites.*

4. *"who excels in carrying tales." thereby spreading rumours and causing enmity between others.*

5. *"who vehemently prevents good" He used to prevent people from accepting Islām and from spending their wealth for good causes. He was also a miserly person.*

6. *"who transgresses" the limits and oppresses others.*

7. *who "is sinful"*

8. *who is "harsh"*

9. *"whose lineage is uncertain as well's Walīd did not belong to the Quraysh and was adopted by Mughiera when he was eighteen years of age. In fact, some commentators say that he was illegitimate. Because many illegitimate children develop evil character traits when they are not brought up properly, they lack the sense of honour and respect that is imbued in other children. It is for this reason that they are usually looked*

down upon.

***10.** "All because he has wealth and sons." Because Walīd was wealthy and had many sons, he became arrogant.*

As a result, he refuted the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says, *"When Our verses are recited to him, he says, 'These are fables of the old men.'"* He claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was merely relating tales that were passed on from generation to generation. Instead of being grateful to Allāh for the bounties Allāh blessed upon him, he became arrogant and rejected the message of Islām.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that to the best of his knowledge, Allāh has not attributed so many evil characteristics to anyone as Allāh had attributed to Walīd bin Mughiera. Walīd had a large nose, which Allāh Ta'āla refers to as a *"snout"* when Allāh says, *"We shall soon brand him on his snout."* It is reported that a sword struck his nose during the Battle of Badr, causing a scar to remain on it. As a result, he appeared unsightly to others. This was his punishment in this world. Of course, the punishment of the Hereafter will be a great deal more severe.

إِنَّا بَلَوْنَٰهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا۟ لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿17﴾ وَلَا يَسْتَثْنُونَ ﴿18﴾ فَطَافَ
عَلَيْهَا طَآئِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ نَآئِمُونَ ﴿19﴾ فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَٱلصَّرِيمِ ﴿20﴾ فَتَنَادَوْا۟ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿21﴾ أَنِ
ٱغْدُوا۟ عَلَىٰ حَرْثِكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰرِمِينَ ﴿22﴾ فَٱنطَلَقُوا۟ وَهُمْ يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ ﴿23﴾ أَن لَّا يَدْخُلَنَّهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ
عَلَيْكُم مِّسْكِينٌ ﴿24﴾ وَغَدَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ حَرْدٍ قَٰدِرِينَ ﴿25﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿26﴾ بَلْ نَحْنُ
مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿27﴾ قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ ﴿28﴾ قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَ رَبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ
﴿29﴾ فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَلَٰوَمُونَ ﴿30﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا طَٰغِينَ ﴿31﴾ عَسَىٰ رَبُّنَآ أَن
يُبْدِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهَآ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَٰغِبُونَ ﴿32﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿33﴾

(17) Verily We have tested them as We tested the people of the orchard when they swore that they will pluck the fruit in the morning.. (18)... but they did not say, "Insha Allāh ". (19) So a visitation from your Lord swept over their orchard as they slept (20) So their orchard had become like a harvested crop by the morning. (21) They called to each other in the morning... (22) "Leave early for the plantation if you wish to pluck the harvest." (23) As they walked, they whispered to each other saying.. (24) .. "No poor person should ever enter your presence today. (25) They proceeded with the thought that they had the power to with hold (26) When they saw the orchard they exclaimed, "We must have lost the way!" (27) "Nay! We are the deprived ones." (28) The good one among them said, "Did I not ask you why you failed to glorify Allāh?" (29) They said,

"Glorified is our Lord! We were oppressors indeed." (30) They turned to each other pinning the blame on one another. (31) They cried, "Woe be to us! We have certainly transgressed!" (32) "We hope that our Lord will replace for us something better than our orchard. Indeed we have confidence in our Lord." (33) Such is the punishment. However, the punishment of the Hereafter is much more severe. If only they knew.

THE STORY OF THE PEOPLE WHO OWNED AN ORCHARD

After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated to Madinah, Allāh Ta'āla afflicted Makkah with a severe drought. Referring to this drought, Allāh says, *"Verily We have tested them (the people of Makkah) as We tested the people of the orchard"*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned that this orchard was near San'ā in Yemen. It was cultivated by people who regularly performed their Salāh. Their heirs were generous people like themselves and always gave some of the crop to the poor. For this reason, the poor always gathered at the orchard when they plucked the fruit and when they separated the grain from the chaff. When one of these generous persons passed away, he left his estate to his three sons. When the harvest was ripe for the plucking, the three brothers met with each other. They decided that if they continued being generous to the poor, their wealth would be depleted and there would be nothing left for their own large families. Therefore, to avoid the throng of poor people, they decided to pluck the fruit very early in the morning and return home with it before the poor could arrive at the orchard. They then took oaths that they will abide by this decision. However, they all forgot to add *"Insha Allāh"* to their oaths. They also undertook not to share any of the harvest with the poor.

During the night, Allāh sent a devastating disaster which wiped out their entire orchard. They slept through the night oblivious of that fact that *"their orchard had become like a harvested crop by the morning."* Corresponding to the Arabic usage of the Banu Khuzayma tribe, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه translated the word *"sarīm "*(translated above as *"harvested crop "*) as black ash.

Subsequently, *"They called to each other in the morning (saying)"* Leave early for the plantation if you wish to pluck the harvest. *"Furthermore,"* As they walked, they whispered to each other saying, *"No poor person should ever enter your presence today."* The three reminded each other about the conditions of their oaths. Allāh says, *"They proceeded with the thought that they had the power to withhold (the share of the poor)."*

However, *"When they saw the orchard (destroyed) they exclaimed, 'We must have lost the way! '"* They thought that they must have gone to someone else's orchard. However, when they realised that it was really their orchard, they lamented, *"Nay (it is our orchard)! We are the deprived ones."* They understood that instead of them trying to deprive the poor, they had become the deprived ones because of their evil intentions.

"The good one among them said, 'Did I not ask you why you failed to glorify Allāh?" i.e. why you failed to say *"Insha Allāh"*. However, the damage was already done and all they could do was grieve over their situation. *"They said,*

'Glorified is our Lord! We were oppressors indeed"'.

"They cried, 'Woe be to us! We have certainly transgressed!'" They realised the error of their ways and undertook to continue the tradition of their forefathers to share the crop with the poor. They then said, *"We hope that our Lord will replace for us something better than our orchard. Indeed we have confidence in our Lord."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه mentioned that he heard that because the Taubah of the brothers was sincere, Allāh blessed them with a vineyard that bore so much grapes that a single bunch was sufficient to load a mule.

Allāh concludes the incident by saying, *"Such is the punishment (in this world for the person who transgresses). However, the punishment of the Hereafter is much more severe. If only they knew."*

(34) Verily the abstinent ones shall have gardens of bliss close to their Lord. (35)Should We treat the obedient ones in the same manner as the disobedient ones? (36) What is the matter with you? How do you judge? (37) Do you have a book with you that you study... (38) ....in which you have things that appeal to you? (39) Or do you have an oath from Us that will last until Judgment Day stating that you shall have whatever you decide? (40) Ask them which of them will stand surety for this. (41) Or do they have partners? Let them bring their partners if they are truthful.

THE OBEDIENT AND THE DISOBEDIENT CANNOT BE TREATED EQUALLY

Describing the rewards of the "Muttaqīn" (abstinent/pious/Allāh fearing people), Allāh says, *"Verily the abstinent ones shall have gardens of bliss close to their Lord."* Thereafter, Allāh asks, *"Should We treat the obedient ones in the same manner as the disobedient ones?"* The sinful shall meet the punishment for their sins while the obedient ones will be rewarded for their obedience. It is not possible that the obedient ones should be deprived of their reward so that they receive treatment equal to the disobedient. Similarly, it is not correct that the Disbelievers receive the blessings of the people of piety.

Whenever the rewards of the *"Muttaqīn" (people with Piety)* used to be mentioned, the disbelievers used to say that they would also receive the same in this world. *"In fact"*, they added, *"we are more deserving than they."* It was in reply to this claim that Allāh says, *"Should We treat the obedient ones in the same manner as the disobedient ones? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?"* Their claim

not only contradicts logic but it also does not conform with the laws of the world. When even worldly courts do not treat an innocent person and a criminal alike, how can such injustice be expected from Allāh Who is the Most Just of all who show justice?

Allāh Ta'āla asks the disbelievers, *"Do you have a (revealed) book with you that you study, in which you have things that appeal to you? Or do you have an oath from Us that will last until Judgment Day stating that you shall have whatever you decide?"* The reply is obvious. Neither do the disbelievers have any divine scripture nor any covenant from Allāh that permits them to do and say what they please. Therefore, how can they take such liberties?

Thereafter, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, *"Ask them which of them will stand surety for this"* i.e. who will stand surety that whatever they (the disbelievers) say is true?

Allāh asks further, *"Or do they have partners? Let them bring their partners if they are truthful."* Allāh asks them to produce those whom they ascribe as His partners, who have promised them that they will be treated like the obedient servants of Allāh. The disbelievers therefore have absolutely no basis to claim that the obedient and the disobedient will be treated equally. Neither do they have a divine scripture that states this, nor an oath from Allāh, nor any partner,, nor anyone of their own who will stand surety for this claim. All thinking people of the world will unanimously agree that it is foolish to make a claim without any basis.

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى ٱلسُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ خَٰشِعَةً أَبْصَٰرُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۖ وَقَدْ كَانُوا۟ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى ٱلسُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

(42) The day when the "shin" will be exposed and people will be summoned to prostrate but will be unable to. (43) Their gazes will be cast down and disgrace shall overcome them. Indeed they used to be summoned to prostrate when they were hail and healthy.

THE "SHIN" WILL BE EXPOSED AND THE HYPOCRITES WILL BE DISGRACED

Describing the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"The day when the 'Shin" will be exposed and people will be summoned to prostrate but will be unable to."* Whereas the true believers will be able to prostrate before Allāh on that occasion, the backs of the hypocrites and those who performed Salāh for show will become rigid like a plank and they will be unable to prostrate. The revealing of the *'Shin"* is among the *"Mutashābihāt"* We should believe in it without trying to scrutinise the meaning and precise manner of occurrence. Pages 731 and 1107 of Bukhari as well as pages 100 and 104 of Muslim record the Ahadīth concerning the exposing of the *'Shin"* and the call to prostrate.

The author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* writes that the summoning to prostrate should not lead one to believe that people will be required to obey instructions in

the Hereafter as they are required to do in this world. People will not be commanded to prostrate when the *'Shin"* is exposed but the occurrence will be so magnificent that they will be forced to prostrate. Since the hypocrites and those who performed Salāh for show will be unable to prostrate, it is obvious that the disbelievers will also be unable to prostrate.

Further describing the pitiful state of the disbelievers and hypocrites on the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"Their gazes will be cast down and disgrace shall overcome them. Indeed they used to be summoned to prostrate when they were hail and healthy."* The reason for their disgrace and inability to prostrate will be that when they were summoned to sincerely prostrate to Allāh in the world while they were healthy and capable, they refused to do so. Had they sincerely prostrated in this world, they would be able to do so in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

Concerning the commentary of *"Indeed they used to be summoned to prostrate when they were hail and healthy", "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (v. 4 p. 383)* reports from Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubayr رحمة الله عليه that these people regularly heard the call of *"Hayya Alas Salāh" ("Come to Salāh")* and *"Hayya Alal Falāh" ("Come to success ")* in the Adhān but they did not respond to the Adhān by performing their Salāh.

(44) So leave Me and the one who falsifies this speech. We shall gradually lead them on in a manner that they do not realise. (45) I am granting them respite. Indeed, My planning is formidable. (46) Or are you asking remuneration from them because of which they feel burdened by a penalty? (47) Or do they have knowledge of the unseen, which they are busy writing?

ALLĀH GRANTS THE DISBELIEVERS RESPITE

In the above verses Allāh Ta'āla sounds a warning to those who reject the truth of the Qur'ān. Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh states, *"So leave Me and the one who falsifies this speech (the Qur'ān). We shall gradually lead them on in a manner that they do not realise."* In this verse, Allāh also consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, telling him not grieve about the fact that the disbelievers are not being punished for their disbelief. Allāh is merely allowing them time to fall deeper into sin and disbelief so that they become deserving of greater punishment in the Hereafter. The disbelievers regard this period of grace as an opportunity to revel more in the pleasures of this world, thinking that they are being blessed. Allāh says, *"I am (only) granting them respite. Indeed, My planning is formidable."*

Allāh asks the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Or are you asking remuneration from them because of which they feel burdened by a penalty?"* The question is

hypothetical. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not ask the people for any remuneration for propagating his message. He did it only to please Allāh. However, they behaved reluctantly as if they were being burdened by an imposed penalty. Seeing that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم endured so much difficulty to propagate the message of Islām without being paid for it, the disbelievers ought to have realised that there was something for their benefit in the message. However, they failed to think and continuously rejected the message.

Allāh asks further, *"Or do they have knowledge of the unseen, which they are busy writing?"* This is another hypothetical question probing the reason for the disbelievers's denial of the Qur'ān. Allāh asks whether it is not perhaps some knowledge of the unseen that is preventing them from believing in the Qur'ān. Since the disbelievers have nothing to prove that they have divine direction to deny what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says, they are obliged to carry out Allāh's commands. It is therefore foolish of them to deny the Qur'ān and the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without any sound reason.

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُن كَصَاحِبِ الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ لَّوْلَا أَن تَدَارَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَاجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَجَعَلَهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(48) So be patient with the decree of your Lord and do not be like the person of the fish. He called as he was suppressing his grief. (49) If the grace of his Lord did not reach him, he would have been cast on to the bare shore in a wretched condition. (50) So his Lord selected him and made him among the righteous.

EXERCISE PATIENCE AND DO NOT BE LIKE THE PERSON OF THE FISH

In the above verses Allāh Ta'āla tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the punishment that the disbelievers deserve will seize them soon enough. Allāh is giving them respite only for a little while so that they may either excel in evil and become deserving of a greater punishment or so that they may have a chance to repent and accept Islām. Allāh advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to grow impatient about this matter. Allāh says, *"So be patient with the decree of your Lord and do not be like the person of the fish."* Allāh Ta'āla refers to Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام as the *'person of the fish"*. When Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام left his nation before Allāh commanded him to, he was swallowed by a fish.

The details of his story have been discussed in the commentaries of Surah Yunus [*Surah 10, verse 98*], Surah Anbiya [*Surah 21, verses 87 and 88*] and Surah Sāffāt [*Surah 37, verse 139-148*].

Referring to the Supplication he made to Allāh to rescue him from the fish, Allāh says, *"He called as he was suppressing his grief"* He was grieved because his people did not accept his message, because he had left them before Allāh's command and because of the discomfort of being in the stomach of the fish. The supplication he made was:

ARABIC

[*"There is no deity besides 'You. You are Pure. I have certainty been from among the oppressors."*]

The author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* mentions that Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام intended to repent to Allāh as well as seek assistance through this supplication. Allāh continues, *"If the grace of his Lord did not reach him, he would have been cast onto the bare shore in a wretched condition."* However, he received Allāh's grace and when he was cast ashore Allāh made a creeper grow over him to give him shade.

"So his Lord selected him and made him among the righteous." Leaving his nation before Allāh commanded him to do so was an error of judgement that is part of human nature. Allāh forgave him and preserved his rank among the righteous and pious Prophets عليهم السلام.

وَإِن يَكَادُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَٰرِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا۟ ٱلذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُۥ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿51﴾ وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿52﴾

(51) When the disbelievers hear the Reminder, it seems as if they could almost make you slip with their gazes and they say, "He is certainly insane!" (52) The Qur'ān is but a Reminder for the universe.

THE DISBELIEVERS WISH TO MAKE YOU FALTER WITH THEIR GAZES

The polytheists of Makkah left no stone unturned to harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They even contemplated afflicting him with the evil eye. They therefore secured the services of a person whose gaze was particularly effective. He was told to cast the evil eye on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would become ill. However, Allāh protected the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he was unaffected by the person.

Other commentators state that the verse does not refer to casting the evil eye, but means that polytheists used to cast angry glances at the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because of the enmity they bore. They called the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم an insane person when he recited the Qur'ān to them, whereas the Qur'ān is *"a Reminder for the universe."* It is impossible that an insane person could be responsible for conveying such a great revelation.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رضى الله عنه states that this verse proves that the effect of the evil eye is a reality. It can have an ill effect on people when Allāh permits. He has quoted many Ahadīth on the subject, including a hadith of the *"Mu'atta"* of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The evil eye is a reality."* Sayyidah Asma bint Umays رضى الله عنها once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether she should treat the children of Sayyidina Ja'far رضى الله عنه for the effects of the evil eye because it affected them very quickly. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her to do so because if anything could outstrip Taqdīr (predestination), it would be the evil eye. [*"Mishkāt" p. 390*].

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite the following Supplication to protect his grandsons Sayyidina Hasan رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Husain رضى الله عنه from evil:

"I seek the protection of "Allāh's complete words for the two of you from every Satan, from every poisonous creature and from every evil eye."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would then say that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام used to use these words to secure protection for his sons Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام and Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Imrān bin Husain رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that incantations may be used عليه السلام to cure the effects of the evil eye and the bite of a poisonous creature. [*"Mishkāt" p. 390 from Ahmad and Tirmidhi*]

Although incantations may also be used to treat other conditions (as proven by the Ahadīth), they are more necessary for the above two situations. The incantations that are permissible in the Shari'ah are those that consist of Allāh's names, verses of the Qur'ān and supplication. One may not use incantations that include polytheistic words because these make one a polytheist. The last verse of Surah Nūn above is a tried and trusted cure for the ill effect of the evil eye.

سورة الحاقة

Makkan	Surah Al-Hāqqah	Verses 52

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحاقة (1) ما الحاقة (2) وما أدراك ما الحاقة (3) كذبت ثمود وعاد بالقارعة (4) فأما
ثمود فأهلكوا بالطاغية (5) وأما عاد فأهلكوا بريح صرصر عاتية (6)
سخرها عليهم سبع ليال وثمانية أيام حسوما فترى القوم فيها صرعى كأنهم أعجاز
نخل خاوية (7) فهل ترى لهم من باقية (8) وجاء فرعون ومن قبله والمؤتفكات
بالخاطئة (9) فعصوا رسول ربهم فأخذهم أخذة رابية (10) إنا لما طغا الماء حملناكم في الجارية
(11) لنجعلها لكم تذكرة وتعيها أذن واعية (12)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) The Inevitable (Day of Judgment)! (2) What is the Inevitable? (3) What shall inform you what the Inevitable is? (4) The Thamūd and the Ād falsified the Clamour. (5.) As for the Thamūd, they were destroyed by a deafening sound. (6) As for the Ād, they were destroyed by an icy tempest. (7) Allāh unleashed it upon them for seven consecutive nights and eight consecutive days. You would have seen them lying flat on the ground as if they were hollow palm trunks. (8) Do you see any of them surviving? (9) Phara'oh (Fir'oun), those before him and the overturned cities sinned. (10) They disobeyed the messengers of their Lord so He seized them most severely. (11) When the waters became turbulent, We carried you in the ark... (12) . . .to make the incident an advice for you so that remembering ears may remember.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THOSE WHO FALSIFIED DAY OF JUDGMENT

The Arabic word *"Hāqqa"* refers to something that is inevitable and which cannot be postponed. In the above context, it refers to the Day of Judgment. Another name for the Day of Judgment is *"Al Qāri'ah"* (*"The Clamour"*), which is used in verse 4 of this Surah. To emphasise the importance of the Judgment day, Allāh begins the Surah by stating, *"The Inevitable! What is the Inevitable? What shall inform you what the Inevitable is?"*

The fundamental teachings of every Prophets عليهم السلام that Allāh sent were three:

(1) *(Belief in Tauhīd (the oneness of Allāh.)*

(2) *(Belief in Risālah* (the prophethood of the particular prophet).

(3) *(Belief in the Day of Judgment).*

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام was sent as a prophet to the Ād while Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام was sent as prophet to the Thamūd. Because these two nations refused to accept the message of these two Prophet عليه السلام, they were destroyed in this very world. Allāh says, *"The Thamūd and the Ād falsified the Clamour. As for the Thamūd, they were destroyed by a deafening sound."* The Arabic word *"Tāghi'ya"* (translated above as *"deafening sound")* literally refers to something that is extremely severe and which transgresses all limits.

Allāh continues, *"As for the Ād, they were destroyed by an icy tempest. Allāh unleashed it upon them for seven consecutive nights and eight consecutive days."* Referring to the punishment of the Ād in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"So We sent a fierce windstorm against them during the ominous days, to make them taste of a humiliating punishment in this worldly life. The punishment of the Hereafter is even more humiliating, and they will never be assisted"* [*Surah 41, verse 16*]

The entire Ād nation was destroyed by this fierce wind. Describing the aftermath of the wind, Allāh says, *"You would have seen them lying flat on the ground as if they were hollow palm trunks. Do you see any of them surviving?"* Just as none of them survived Allāh's punishment, readers of the Qur'ān should bear in mind that they also are helpless against Allāh's punishment. They should therefore ensure that they never warrant this punishment for themselves.

THE FLOODS DURING THE TIME OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام

Allāh says further about the disbelievers after the Ād and Thamūd, "Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)*, those before him and the overturned cities sinned. They *disobeyed the messengers of their Lord so He seized them most severely."* Like their disobedient predecessors, these people met the same fate when Allāh's punishment overtook them. The *"overturned cities"* refers to the cities of the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام.

Allāh then speaks about the floods during the time of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"When the waters became turbulent, We carried you in the ark..."* Every person during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as well as every person alive today is from the progeny of the believers who were rescued in the ark of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام because they were the only people to survive the floods. Therefore, every person owes his existence to the fact that Allāh saved the believers during the floods. Because those believers were the forefathers of the reader of the Qur'ān, Allāh says *"We carried you in the ark"* instead of saying *"We carried them in the ark"*

Allāh says further that this incident transpired *"... to make the incident an advice*

for you so that remembering ears may remember." It is only people who take the time to ponder and reflect who will learn a lesson from such incidents.

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي ٱلصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَٰحِدَةٌ (13) وَحُمِلَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَٰحِدَةً (14)
فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ ٱلْوَاقِعَةُ (15) وَٱنشَقَّتِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ (16) وَٱلْمَلَكُ عَلَىٰٓ أَرْجَآئِهَا
وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَٰنِيَةٌ (17) يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ (18)
فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ هَآؤُمُ ٱقْرَءُوا۟ كِتَٰبِيَهْ (19) إِنِّي ظَنَنتُ أَنِّي مُلَٰقٍ حِسَابِيَهْ
(20) فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ (21) فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ (22) قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ (23) كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟
هَنِيٓـًٔا بِمَآ أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي ٱلْأَيَّامِ ٱلْخَالِيَةِ (24) وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِشِمَالِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِي لَمْ
أُوتَ كِتَٰبِيَهْ (25) وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَهْ (26) يَٰلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ ٱلْقَاضِيَةَ (27) مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيَهْ
(28) هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَٰنِيَهْ (29) خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ (30) ثُمَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ (31) ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا
سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَٱسْلُكُوهُ (32) إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ (33) وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ
ٱلْمِسْكِينِ (34) فَلَيْسَ لَهُ ٱلْيَوْمَ هَٰهُنَا حَمِيمٌ (35) وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غِسْلِينٍ (36) لَّا يَأْكُلُهُۥٓ إِلَّا
ٱلْخَٰطِـُٔونَ (37)

(13) When the trumpet will be blown once... (14) .. .and the earth and mountains lifted and smashed to bits all at once... (15) . . .on that day that will take place which is to take place. (16) The sky will be split and become absolutely weak that day... (17) .... with angels at its ends. That day eight angels shall carry the throne of your Lord above them. (18) On that day, you will all be presented and nothing of yours shall be remain hidden. (19) As for the one who receives his record (of deeds) in his right hand, he will call out, "Come and read my record!" (20) "I was always convinced that I shall certainly meet my reckoning. (21) So he will enjoy a pleasing life... (22) ..... in lofty gardens. (23) The fruit of these gardens are near at hand. (24) "Eat and drink with all blessings as a reward for the (good) deeds that you sent ahead during the days gone by." (25) As for the one who receives his record in the left hand, he will cry, "Oh dear! If only I were not given my record..." (26) "...and I had not known my reckoning!" (27) "Alas! If only death had been my end!" (28) "My wealth has not helped me." (29) "My kingship has been lost to me." (30) "Grab him and place a yoke around his neck!" (31) "Then enter him into the Blaze!" (32) Then fasten him in a chain seventy cubits in length." (33) "Verily he never believed in the Majestic Allāh..." (34) "...and he never encouraged feeding the poor." (35) "There shall neither be any friend for him today..." (36) "...nor any food except 'ghislīn'." (37) "Only the sinners shall eat it."

THE EARTH AND MOUNTAINS WILL BE REDUCED TO BITS ON THE DAY OF Q1YĀMAH (*JUDGMENT*) AND PEOPLE WILL BE GIVEN THEIR RECORDS OF DEEDS

Describing the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"When the trumpet will be blown once and the earth and mountains lifted and smashed to bits all at once, on that day that will take place which is to take place. The sky will be split and become absolutely weak that day with angels at its ends. That day eight angels shall carry the throne of your Lord above them."* Commentators state that eight angels shall be carrying Allāh's throne after the trumpet is blown the second time.

Allāh continues, *"On that day you will all be presented and nothing of yours shall be remain hidden."* Even though Allāh has knowledge of everything that man does, He ensures that the angels record every deed. Surah Jāthiya mentions that on the Day of Judgment people will be told about their records of deeds, *"This is Our Book which speaks against you with the truth. Verily We used to have everything you did recorded."* [*Surah 45, verse 29*]

Allāh says, *"As for the one who receives his record (of deeds) in his right hand, he will (happily) call out (to everyone else), 'Come and read my record! I was always convinced that I shall certainly meet my reckoning.'"* Receiving one's record of deeds in one's right hand will be the sign that one is successful. The person who is convinced about reckoning on the Day of Judgment will be extremely cautious about all his deeds and will abstain from sin.

Allāh then describes the bounties that the successful person will enjoy in the Ākhirah. Allāh says, *"So he will enjoy a pleasing life in lofty gardens. The fruit of these gardens are near at hand."* Also describing the fruit of Heaven, Allāh says in Surah Rahmān, *"The fruit of both gardens shall be extremely close."* These verses make it clear that a person in Heaven will have no difficulty reaching any fruit he pleases because they will all be within easy reach.

The people of Heaven will be told, *"Eat and drink with all blessings as a reward for the (good) deeds that you sent ahead during the days gone by."*

Allāh Ta'āla then speaks of the pitiable condition of the unsuccessful ones who will receive their records of deeds in their left hands behind their backs. Allāh says, *"As for the one who receives his record in the left hand, he will cry, 'Oh dear! If only I were not given my record and I had not known my reckoning! Alas! If only death had been my end!"'* He will wish that everything had come to an end once he died and that he did not have to be resurrected. Lamenting further, he will say, *"My wealth has not helped me. My kingship has been lost to me."* Neither his wealth nor his position in the world was of any benefit to him.

THE HUMILIATION OF THE DISBELIEVERS

Instructing the angels on the Day of Judgment, Allāh shall say, *"Grab him (the disbeliever) and place a yoke around his neck! Then enter him into the Blaze! Then fasten him in a chain seventy cubits in length. Verily he never believed in the Majestic Allāh and he never encouraged feeding the poor."*

The condition of the disbelievers in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* will be the antithesis of the believer's condition. The believers will receive bliss and peace in

Heaven because they were convinced of the forthcoming resurrection. The resurrection is therefore a blessing for them. On the other hand, the resurrection will be a curse for the disbelievers because they will be subjected to eternal punishment. They will wish that it had never occurred. Then they will realise that the wealth and positions they hankered after in this world are useless because these cannot save them from Allāh's punishment.

GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD

People attain posts in high offices with great effort and often after perpetrating great injustices. When monarchies controlled countries, people vied to become king. Nowadays, countries are run by the farce termed democratic leadership. Very few people are unaware of the large sums of money spent on sustaining election campaigns and subsequent celebrations and ceremonies. In addition to this, various crimes like bribery and even murder pave the way to many electoral victories. Any post achieved after such evils must surely be a curse to its bearer.

The Shari'ah dictates that position should not be given to a person who is desirous of it. The Ahadīth make it clear that such position will be a source of despair in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. While a person may rejoice at being elected president or minister, he may well be fettered in chains on the Day of Judgment. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amar رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if a ball of lead the size of a cup has to be dropped from the sky, which is a journey of five hundred years, it would reach the earth before nightfall. However, if it is dropped from one end of a chain of Hell, it would take forty years before it reaches the opposite end. [*"Mishkāt" p. 504 from Tirmidhi*]

NOTE: One of the reasons mentioned for the punishment of the disbeliever in Hell is that he did not believe in Allāh. The second is that he did not encourage feeding of the poor. This shows the importance of feeding the poor and encouraging others to do the same. Neglecting this duty is so grave that it is mentioned with Disbelief. One can then imagine the gravity of usurping the wealth of the poor and oppressing them in any way.

THE PEOPLE OF HELL WILL HAVE TO EAT "GHISLĪN (*FILTH*)"

Allāh says, *"There shall neither be any friend for him today nor any food except 'ghislīn'. Only the sinners shall eat it."* The word "ghislīn" is derived from the word "ghusl" which means "to wash". Commentators state that 'ghislīn" refers to the filth that accumulates after the wounds of the people of Hell are washed and cleansed. Because the bodies of the people in Hell will be perpetually covered in puss and blood, there is no question of them benefiting from any treatment. It is for this reason that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has interpreted the word 'ghislīn" as the blood and puss that flows from the flesh of the people of Hell. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 29 p. 58*]

فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّهُۥ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ

(38) I swear by the things that you see... (39) ......and by the things that you do not see! (40) Verily this Qur'ān is a word brought by an honoured messenger [Jibrīl عليه السلام]. (41) It is not the word of a poet. Few are those of you who believe. (42) Neither is it the word of a fortune-teller. Few are those of you who understand. (43) It is a revelation from the Lord of the universe. (44) If he [Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] has (falsely) attributed some words to Us... (45) ...We shall grab him by his right hand. (46) We shall then sever his jugular vein... (47) .... and none of you will be able to protect him. (48) The Qur'ān is certainly advice for the pious. (49) Indeed We know that some of you falsify (it). (50) This shall certainly be a source of remorse for the disbelievers. (51) It is undoubtedly the absolute truth. (52) So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord.

THE QUR'ĀN IS ALLĀH'S WORD AND CONTAINS ADVICE FOR THE PIOUS

The above verses describe the Qur'ān and refute the statements of those disbelievers who claimed that the Qur'ān is not word of Allāh. Allāh says, *"I swear by the things that you see and by the things that you do not see! Verily this Qur'ān is a word brought by an honoured messenger [Jibrīl عليه السلام]. It is not the word of a poet. Few are those of you who believe. Neither is it the word of a fortune-teller. Few are those of you who understand."* The works of poets are unlike the average speech of people and the words of fortune-tellers contain hundreds of lies together with a few truths concerning forthcoming events. They get the news from Satan who eavesdrop on the conversations of the angels. This subject has been discussed in Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 16-18*], Surah Sāffāt [*Surah 37, verses 6-10*] and Surah Mulk [*Surah 67, verse 5*]. More is also mentioned in the Surah Jinn (*Surah 72*).

It was sheer stubbornness that led the Polytheists of Makkah to call the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a poet and a fortune-teller because they knew him very well and were certain that he was neither of the two. However, there were those who forsook this unwarranted stubbornness and accepted the Islām. It is with reference to these people that Allāh adds *"Few are those of you who believe"* and *"Few are those-of you who understand."*

By taking an oath on everything man sees and everything that he does not see, Allāh has effectively taken an oath by everything that He has created. Allāh has therefore used His entire creation to testify that the Qur'ān has certainly been brought by a most honoured messenger angel, viz. Jibrīl عليه السلام. Among the other interpretations of *"the things that you see" and "the things that you do not see"*

are:

- *The effects of Allāh's power and the secrets behind these.*
- *Bodies and souls.*
- *Man, Jinn and the angels.* [Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 29 p. 60]

Allāh tells people that Jibrīl عليه السلام is an honourable messenger whom Allāh has used to convey the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Other commentators state that the *"honoured messenger"* refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself, meaning that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was honoured by the mantle of prophethood. He was therefore a prophet of Allāh and not a poet or a fortune-teller.

Allāh continues to say that the Qur'ān *"is a revelation from the Lord of the universe."* This verse emphasises what has already been said and also clarifies a doubt that may creep into one's mind if verse 40 is understood to mean: *"Verily this Qur'ān is the word of an honoured messenger"* instead of *"Verily this Qur'ān is a word brought by an honoured messenger"* .

Allāh continues, *"If he* [Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *has (falsely) attributed some words to Us, We shall grab him by his right hand. We shall then sever his jugular vein and none of you will be able to protect him."* These verses prove the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a false claimant to prophethood and falsely claimed that Allāh had revealed the Qur'ān to him, there is nothing to stop Allāh from punishing him most severely.

The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that Allāh has portrayed the punishment in this manner because it is a disgraceful punishment meted to lowly criminals. It was common in earlier times that the executioner would grab the condemned person by the right hand and then behead him, causing the jugular vein to be severed. Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه interprets the punishment to mean that first his right hand would be cut and then his jugular vein. Such a punishment would serve as an effective lesson for everyone else.

"The Qur'ān is certainly advice for the pious" i.e. for those who fear Allāh, who fulfil His commands and abstain from sin.

"Indeed We know that some of you falsjfy (it)." Allāh is Aware of every person who denies the truth of the Qur'ān and will punish them for this.

"This (Qur'ān) shall certainly be a source of remorse for the disbelievers." When the believers will be rewarded with the bounties of Heaven in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* for believing in and for practising the Qur'ān, those who rejected the Qur'ān will regret their actions and wish that they had also done the same. However, it will then be too late and they will have to suffer the torment of Hell.

"It (the Qur'ān) is undoubtedly the absolute truth." There is nothing doubtful in the Qur'ān and everything it contains is absolutely true.

Allāh concludes the Surah by stating, *"So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord."* Just as Allāh is the Greatest, His name is also the greatest. Man is enjoined

to hymn Allāh's praises because Allāh is certainly worthy of every praise.

A CAUTIONARY NOTE

Verse 40 of Surah Ahzāb (Surah 33) clearly announces that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's final messenger. It is therefore obvious that everyone who claimed prophethood after him were false in their claim. These people all suffered the consequences of their evil. One of these is referred to as Musaylama Punjab who lived in Gurdaspur in the Qādiān district of India. Claiming to be a prophet, he also made various prophecies, all of which proved to be false. Even those prophecies that were specifically intended to prove his truthfulness exposed his falsehood.

Using the above verses of Surah Hāqqah to substantiate his claim to prophethood, he told the people that if he were false, Allāh Ta'āla would have already severed his jugular vein and ensured that he lived no longer. Little did he realise that the verses of Surah Hāqqah above refer to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and not to every person who pleases to call himself a prophet. There were many false prophets before Musaylama Punjab who did not suffer this plight because Allāh is not obliged to disprove them in this manner. In fact, if he were killed, he would not have suffered the disgrace he did when all his prophecies failed. He was subjected to repeated disgrace as one prophecy after another failed. This made it clear to people that he was certainly not a prophet.

The poor man did not read the verse of Surah Nisā where Allāh says, *"Whoever opposes the messenger after the guidance has become manifest to him and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall allow him to do that which he is doing and then enter him into Hell. It is the worst of abodes."* When a person chooses to remain deviant, his hearts worsens all the time as Allāh says in Surah Saff, *"However, when they chose to be crooked, Allāh further twisted their hearts."* [*Surah 61, verse 5*]

Therefore, no deviant person should ever think that he is treading the right path merely because he is living well and because Allāh has not afflicted him with punishment. Allāh is merely allowing him to do as he pleases so that he may plunge further into sin. Thereafter, Allāh will cast him into Hell where he will realise the error of his ways. The above verse of Surah Nisā makes it clear that the person who treads a path other than that of the believers will find himself in Hell. May Allāh save us all. Āmīn.

سورة المعارج

Makkan	Surah Al-Ma'ārij	Verses 44

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ (1) لِّلْكَافِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ (2) مِّنَ اللَّهِ ذِي الْمَعَارِجِ (3) تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ (4) فَاصْبِرْ صَبْرًا جَمِيلًا (5) إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا (6) وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا (7)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful

(1) An enquirer asks about a pending punishment... (2) ...that will afflict the disbelievers, which cannot be averted... (3) ... and is from Allāh, the Controller of the skies. (4) The angels and souls ascend to Him. This punishment will take place on a day, the duration of which shall be fifty thousand years. (5) So exercise patience in a most beautiful manner. (6) Verily they see it being far off... (7) . . .but We see it being nearby.

THERE SHALL BE NONE TO AVERT PUNISHMENT ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

The Surah derives its name from the word *"Dhil Ma'ārij "*(translated above as *"the Controller of the skies"* in the third verse, which is an attribute of Allāh Ta'āla. Ma'ārij is the plural of the word *"Ma'rij"* which refers to a place of climbing. Commentators state that the Ma'ārij refer to the skies because the angels are constantly climbing to and fro the skies.

Referring to the circumstances surrounding the revelation of the opening verses of the Surah, commentators quote the supplication of Nadhar bin Hārith, a polytheist who was an arch enemy of the Muslims in Makkah. He prayed, *"O Allāh! If this religion (Islām) is the truth, then shower stones on us or afflict us with some painful punishment (for not accepting it)." 'Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports from Nasa'ī that it was Abu Jahl who made this supplication. It was then that Allāh revealed the verses, *"An enquirer asks about a pending punishment that will afflict the disbelievers, which cannot be averted and is from Allāh, the Controller of the skies."*

Just as Allāh is Capable of punishing the Polytheists with a shower of stones from the sky as they requested, He can also punish them with the very earth on

which they live (such as an earthquake). Allāh exercises control over the earth just as He exercises control over the earth. The result of this supplication was that Nadhar bin Hārith, Abu Jahl and many other polytheists leaders were killed during the Battle of Badr. In total, seventy polytheists were killed during the battle of Badr and seventy were taken captive, many of whom accepted Islām.

Allāh continues, *"The angels and souls ascend to Him.* "The angels ascend to the heavens where they receive their commands from Allāh and then return to fulfil these on earth. When people pass away, their souls are transported to the heavens to be presented before Allāh and are then sent back to either live peacefully in the grave or to suffer punishment.

"This punishment will take place on a day, the duration of which shall be fifty thousand years." The punishment that the polytheists asked for will take place on the Day of Judgment. This punishment of the Hereafter will be in addition to the punishment they received during the Battle of Badr. The two punishments are separate and both are implied by the *'pending punishment"*.

RECONCILING THE DAY OF A THOUSAND YEARS WITH THE DAY OF FIFTY THOUSAND YEARS

The *"day the duration of which shall be fifty thousand years"* refers to the Day of Judgment, as substantiated by a hadith of Muslim which describes the punishment of those who do not pay their Zakāh. However, Surah Sajdah states, *"He ordains every affair from the heavens to the earth, after which every affair will ascend to Him on a day, the duration of which is a thousand years according to your count."* [*Surah 32, verse 5*]

This verse of Surah Sajdah describes the duration of the Day of Judgment to be a thousand years. Ahadith of *"Mishkāt"* (*p. 447*) states that the poor will enter Heaven five hundred years before the rich, which is half a day earlier.

There therefore appears to be a discrepancy concerning the duration of the Day of Judgment; fifty thousand years or one thousand years? Scholars mention that the difference in duration will depend on the condition of people. While it will appear to some that the day is fifty thousand years long because of its severity, others will feel that it is a thousand years long, while it will seem even shorter to others. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that someone once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم out of surprise, *"How long will that day be, the duration of which is fifty thousand years!"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"I swear by the Being in whose control is my life! The day will be made so easy for the believer that it will seem easier than a person performing Salāh in this world.* "[*"Mishkāt" p. 487*]

Refer also to what has been discussed in the commentaries of verse 5 of Surah Sajdah (*Surah* 32) and verse 47 of Surah Hajj (*Surah* 22), where Allāh states, *"Verily a single day with your Lord is like a thousand years according to your count."*

Allāh continues, *"So exercise patience in a most beautiful manner."* This type of patience entails that one should not complain in the least. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he has completed his task of conveying the message to the people. If they still refuse to accept, he should not become despondent and

sad. He should be patient because if they are not punished in this world, they will certainly meet the consequences of their evil in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).*

Allāh says, *"Verily they see it (Judgment Day) being far off but We see it being nearby."* The disbelievers treat the news of Judgment Day like a myth whereas it is a certain reality and everything that is certain is not far off. Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *"Without a trace of doubt, what you have been promised will certainly come to pass and you cannot escape."* [*Surah 6, verse 134*]

(8) The day when the sky will become like the dirty residue of oil... (9) ...and the mountains will become like coloured wool. (10) No friend will ask about another friend... (11) ... even though they will be shown each other. The sinner will wish that as ransom for the punishment of that day he could offer his sons... (12) ...his wife, his brother... (13) . . .his tribe with whom he lived... (14) ... and everyone on earth so that he may be saved. (15) This will never be.' The Fire shall certainly be flaming... (16) . . .tearing off the scalp. (17) It will call the one who turned away and was averse... (18) ... who amassed wealth and tended it.

ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, FRIENDS WILL NOT ASK ABOUT EACH OTHER AND PEOPLE WILL WANT TO OFFER THEIR RELATIVES AS RANSOM TO SAVE THEMSELVES

Describing the day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"The day when the sky will become like the dirty residue of oil and the mountains will become like coloured wool."* Surah Qāri'ah [*Surah 101, verse 5*] adds that the mountains will fly about like coloured cotton wool. The author of *"Jalālain"* has translated the verse to mean that the sky will become like molten silver, which aptly portrays verse 16 of Surah Hāqqah which states that the sky will *"become absolutely weak that day"*.

After describing the condition of the sky and mountains on the Day of Judgment, Allāh speaks about the perplexity of people on the Plains of Resurrection when he says, *"No friend will ask about another friend even though they will be shown each other."* None will be able to assist another and each person will be so preoccupied with his own predicament that he will be oblivious of others.

"The sinner will wish that as ransom for the punishment of that day he could offer his sons, his wife, his brother, his tribe with whom he lived and everyone on earth so that he may be saved." People will be so concerned about their own plight that they will be prepared to give everything that was dear to them in this world so that they may be saved from the punishment of Hell. However, no amount of ransom will be accepted and each person will have to face the punishment he deserves.

Allāh continues, *"The Fire shall certainly be flaming, tearing off the scalp. It will call the one who turned away (from the truth) and was averse, who amassed wealth and tended it."* The above verses make it clear that the disbeliever will not mind ransoming everyone on earth to save himself from the punishment of Hell. However, this will not help him at all because nothing will be accepted as ransom on the day of Judgment. Hell will recognise those that are destined to enter her and she will call for them. Although people of different types will enter Hell, the verse briefly mentions that the people to enter Hell will be those who were averse to the truth and hoarded the wealth of this world instead.

The verse describes the disbeliever as a person who has tremendous love for wealth and who is miserly. Such people do not spend their wealth in charity and will do anything to amass wealth. They will not hesitate to accept bribes, to usurp the wealth of others and to swindle others. In their love for hefty bank balances, they do not discriminate between lawful and unlawful means. The destination of such people is the fire of Hell. Those Muslims who are guilty of the same behaviour should ponder about their ways. They should make an effort to earn Halāl (*Lawful*) wealth and to fulfil the rights that they owe. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه would say, *"O children of Ādam* عليه السلام*! You hear the warnings yet you continue amassing wealth."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"On the Day of Judgment, a neck will appear from Hell with eyes to see with, ears to hear with and a tongue to speak with. It will then say, 'I have been appointed (to punish) three persons (viz.)"*

- *Every person who is a rebellious oppressor.*
- *Every person who worships another with Allah.*
- *Every picture-maker." ["Mishkāt" from Tirmidhi]*

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports that just as a bird runs about looking for grains, this neck will seek out those who are destined for Hell.

إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا
﴿٢١﴾ إِلَّا ٱلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ دَآئِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ
حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَٱلْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بِيَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم
مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ
حَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ فَمَنِ
ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْعَادُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَٰنَٰتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَٰعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِشَهَٰدَٰتِهِمْ قَآئِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ

(19) Verily man has been created anxious. (20) When difficulty afflicts him, he panics... (21)... and when he experiences good fortune, he becomes miserly. (22) (This is the condition of all) except those who perform Salāh... (23) .those who are constant in their Salāh... (24) ....and who have a stipulated right in their wealth... (25) ...for the beggar and the destitute. (26) (They are) Those who believe in the truth of the day of reckoning... (27)....and who fear the punishment of their Lord. (28) Indeed the punishment of their Lord is not something not to be afraid of .(29) (They are) Those who safeguard their chastity... (30) .except when it comes to their spouses and the slave women whom they own. They will surely not be blamed for (cohabiting with) them. (31) Whoever seeks more than this, then such persons are transgressors indeed. (32) Those who give due regard to trusts and their pledges... (33) ...who stand firm by their testimony... (34) ...and who guard their Salāh. (35) These people shall be honoured in the gardens of Heaven.

THE FICKLE NATURE OF MAN AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH'S PIOUS BONDSMEN

The above verses describe man's evil characteristics and many of his positive qualities. In the previous verses, Allāh mentioned that Hell will call those people who were averse to the truth and who constantly amassed wealth. Allāh continues with the description of man's character traits when He says, *"Verily man has been created anxious."* The author of *'Ruhul Ma'āni"* writes that the Arabic word *"halū'ā"* (translated above as *"anxious ")* refers to that aspect of man's nature when he becomes nervous because of haste. The word is generally used to describe the behaviour of camels.

Describing man further, Allāh says, *"When difficulty afflicts him, he panics and when he experiences good fortune, he becomes miserly."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has mentioned that these two verses elucidate the meaning of *"halū'ā"*. The verses tell us that man's anxious nature becomes evident when difficulty afflicts him. He then begins to wail and lament. On the other hand, when he experiences good fortune, he does not spend his wealth on the poor and needy. Instead, he fears that his bank balance should not experience any deficit. He becomes miserly despite knowing that his wealth will not last forever and that he will be unable to take it with him after death. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم has mentioned that the worst qualities that are present in a person are miserliness that makes a person fearful and cowardice that extracts the soul. ["Mishkāt" p. *165* from Abu Dawūd]

Allāh then begins to describe those fortunate bondsmen of His who conquer these traits. Allāh says that they are:

Firstly. *"Those who perform Salāh"* and *"who are constant in their Salāh"*. Commenting on this attribute, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* writes that such a person regularly performs his Salāh and he does not allow anything to distract him from it. Quoting another interpretation, he says that such people do not allow their thoughts and concentration to deviate while performing Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"When you perform Salāh, perform the Salāh of a*

person who is bidding farewell (to this world)." ["Mishkāt" p. 445]

Secondly. Those *"who have a stipulated right in their wealth for the beggar and the destitute."* Such noble people spend their wealth on those needy people who beg for assistance as well as on those who do not beg despite dire necessity. They seek out those in need and fulfil their needs without being asked. While some commentators say that the *"stipulated right"* refers to Zakāh, others state that this refers to a fixed sum of charity that a person undertakes to spend either daily, weekly, monthly, etc.

Thirdly. *"Those who believe in the truth of the day of reckoning".* They have firm conviction that all their good deeds will be rewarded in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).* Although all believers hold this belief, the difference between the average believer and those belonging to this group of devoted bondsmen is that the latter make every attempt to prepare for the Ākhirah.

Fourthly. Those *"who fear the punishment of their Lord. Indeed the punishment of their Lord is not something not to be afraid of"* Despite remaining engaged in various types of Ibādah (*worship*), these people fear that their deeds may not be accepted because of some deficiency on their part. They are always concerned that they may be taken to task for their misdeeds and they do not become complacent. Describing such people in Surah Muminūn , Allāh Ta'āla says, *"...those who spend of what they have been granted and whose hearts tremble because they have to return to their Lord."* A true believer never feels that he is totally safe from Allāh's punishment.

Fifthly. *"Those who safeguard their chastity except when it comes to their spouses and the slave women whom they own. They will surely not be blamed for (cohabiting with) them (because these women are lawful for them). Whoever seeks more than this (i.e. other women besides their wives and slaves), then such persons are transgressors indeed."* When a person seeks to satisfy' his sexual desires in a manner other than the lawful means that Allāh has ordained, he will be guilty of a grave sin which will warrant punishment in both worlds.

This verse outlaws all manners of sexual gratification that do not involve one's lawful spouse or lawful slave woman. Therefore, homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, masturbation etc are all Harām (*forbidden*). Also outlawed is the practice of Mut'ah which the Rawāfidh hold sacred. Despite other reasons for its impermissibility, the above verse clearly prohibits it because even by the definition of the Rawāfidh, the woman with whom Mut'ah is practised is not regarded as the man's wife. It is for this reason that they believe that if a man dies before the expiry of the Mut'ah term, the woman will not inherit from his estate. There are several other rights owing to a wife that they do not accord for the woman in a Mut'ah contract, making it evident that such a woman is not the wife of her consenting *"partner"*.

Sixthly. *"Those who give due regard to trusts and their pledges* All the rights that man owes to Allāh are regarded as trusts and must be fulfilled. Among these are Salāh, Zakāh, fasting, Kaffāra (*expiation*), fulfilling vows and all other obligations. These matters are between the individual and Allāh and every person knows where he has slipped up. Man is also obliged to fulfil the trusts that he owes to his fellow man. Kings, presidents, ministers and people in positions of authority

occupy positions of trust and have to fulfil these honestly. Failing in their responsibilities will entail a breach of trust.

Ties of mutual trust also exist between a buyer and seller, husband and wife and parents and children. In each situation, either party is obliged to fulfil the trust owed to the other party by fulfilling the rights owed to the other. Failure to fulfil the trust owed to another will subject one to severe reckoning on the Day of Judgment. It is also compulsory for one to restore the trust that another person places in one's custody.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه narrates that a villager once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when Judgment Day will take place. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"Wait for Judgment Day when trusts will be breached."* When the person asked how trusts will be breached, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Wait for Judgment Day when positions of authority will be given to people who are not worthy of them."*

In addition to fulfilling trusts, Allāh also emphasises fulfilling pledges. This includes pledges made with people as well as the pledge of *"Alist"* when mankind pledged that they would always regard Allāh as their Lord. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"And fulfil the pledge. Certainly, questioning shall take place with regard to pledges."* [*Surah 17, verse 34*]

Seventhly. Those *"who stand firm by their testimony"*. This verse refers to all forms of testimony, including testifying to the oneness of Allāh, the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and testifying to the truth of everything that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught. Presenting true and accurate testimony in judicial hearings is also implied. This is especially important to ensure that no person's rights are trampled upon. Sayyidina Zaid bin Khālid رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked, *"Should I not inform you about the person whose testimony is best? He is the person who offers his testimony before he is asked to do so." When a person can offer testimony which would restore someone's right and ensure justice, he is obliged to offer the testimony when summoned. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, "The witnesses should not refuse when summoned ... Conceal not testimony for whoever conceals it has a sinful heart."* [*Surah 2, verses 282, 283*]

Eighthly. Those *"who guard their Salāh"*. Being particular about one's Salāh is an integral quality of a believer. Because of its great importance, adherence to Salāh is repeated.

Allāh concludes the description by announcing the reward that such people will receive. Allāh says, *"These people shall be honoured in the gardens of Heaven."*

فَمَالِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ عَنِ ٱلْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ ٱلشِّمَالِ عِزِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَيَطْمَعُ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍ
مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ كَلَّآ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰهُم مِّمَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ
ٱلْمَشَٰرِقِ وَٱلْمَغَٰرِبِ إِنَّا لَقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ فَذَرْهُمْ
يَخُوضُوا۟ وَيَلْعَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يُلَٰقُوا۟ يَوْمَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ

(36) What is the matter with the disbelievers that they run towards you... (37) ... in groups to your right and your left? (38) Does every one of them desire that he should enter the garden of bliss? (39) This shall never be! Verily We have created them from what they know. (40) I swear by the Lord of the East and the West! Indeed We have the power... (41) ...to replace them with people better than them. We can never be outstripped. (42) So leave them to indulge and to frolic until they meet their day that they are promised... (43) the day when they will hurriedly emerge from the graves as if they are rushing towards a temple. (44) Their gazes will be lowered and humiliation will engulf them. This is the day that they were promised.

LEAVE THE DISBELIEVERS TO OWN THEIR DEVICES FOR THEY WILL SOON BE DISGRACED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

The above verses refer to the behaviour of the disbelievers towards the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to sit near the Ka'ba to recite Qur'ān, the polytheists used to form several groups and sit around him. They then used to mock the Qur'ān as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited. Seeing the poor Muslims with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the polytheists used to say, *"If these people are going to enter Heaven like Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم says, then we will surely enter first."*

Allāh says, *"What is the matter with the disbelievers that they run towards you in groups to your right and your left? Does every one of them desire that he should enter the garden of bliss?"* Allāh dispels this hope of theirs by saying, *"This shall never be!"* The polytheists claimed that since Allāh had given them wealth in this world, He would give them even better in the Ākhirah. This hope was foolish and totally unfounded.

"Verily We have created them from what they know" i.e. from a sperm. Knowing that Allāh had created them from such a humble origin, the polytheists are foolish to deny resurrection. Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"Was he (man) not a discharge of semen, after which he developed into a clot of blood and then Allāh created him and perfected him? Then Allāh made the couple male and female. Does He then not have the power to resurrect the dead?"* [*Surah 75, verses 37-40*]

Allāh continues, *"I swear by the Lord of the East and the West! Indeed We have the power to (destroy them and to) replace them with people better than them. We can never be outstripped."*

"So leave them to indulge (in falsehood) and to frolic until they meet their day that they are promised" i.e. the Day of Judgment. Such people were not destined to believe until death. Describing the Day of Judgment, Allāh says that it is *"the day when they will hurriedly emerge from the graves as if they are rushing towards a temple. Their gazes will be lowered and humiliation will engulf them. This is the day that they were promised."* The disbelievers deny the occurrence of Judgment Day when they are reminded about it. However, they will regret their scepticism when it will occur before their very eyes. Then it will be too late to believe.

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سورة نوح

Makkan	Surah Nūh	Verses 28

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦٓ أَنْ أَنذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿1﴾ قَالَ
يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿2﴾ أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿3﴾ يَغْفِرْ لَكُم مِّن
ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا جَآءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ ۖ لَوْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿4﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِى لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا ﴿5﴾ فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَآءِىٓ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿6﴾ وَإِنِّى
كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوٓا۟ أَصَٰبِعَهُمْ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَٱسْتَغْشَوْا۟ ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصَرُّوا۟
وَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ ٱسْتِكْبَارًا ﴿7﴾ ثُمَّ إِنِّى دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا ﴿8﴾ ثُمَّ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَنتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ
إِسْرَارًا ﴿9﴾ فَقُلْتُ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿10﴾ يُرْسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيْكُم مِّدْرَارًا
﴿11﴾ وَيُمْدِدْكُم بِأَمْوَٰلٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ أَنْهَٰرًا ﴿12﴾ مَّا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ
لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ﴿13﴾ وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا ﴿14﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَوْا۟ كَيْفَ خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ طِبَاقًا ﴿15﴾
وَجَعَلَ ٱلْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا ﴿16﴾ وَٱللَّهُ أَنۢبَتَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ﴿17﴾
ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا ﴿18﴾ وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ﴿19﴾ لِّتَسْلُكُوا۟
مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ﴿20﴾

In the name of Allāh, Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Verily We sent Nūh عليه السلام as a prophet to his nation instructing him, "Warn your people before a painful punishment afflicts them." (2) He said, "O my people! Indeed I am a clear warner to you." (3) "Worship Allāh, fear Him and obey me. (4) "Allāh will then forgive your sins and grant you respite until a specified period. Verily, when Allāh 's specified period arrives, it is not delayed. If only you knew." (5) He said, "O my Lord! Indeed I called my people day and night..." (6) "However, my calling only made them run further away." (7)

"Whenever I called them so that You may forgive them, they placed their fingers in their ears, covered themselves with their shawls, remained implacable and expressed great pride." (8) "I then called to them loudly..." (9) "...and explained to them publicly and privately." (10) "I said to them, 'Seek forgiveness from your Lord. Indeed He is Most Forgiving."(11) "'He will send rain to you in torrents... (12) "'...increase your wealth, your sons and make orchards and rivers for you. (13) "'What is the matter with you that you are not convinced of Allāh's majesty... (14) "'...when He has created you in so many phases?"' (15) "'Have you not seen how Allāh has created the seven skies in layers... (16) "'...has made the moon a celestial light in them and the sun a lantern?" (17) "'Allāh has created you from the earth in a unique manner. (18) "'He will then return you to the earth and then remove you from it in a unique manner. (19) "'And Allāh has made the earth a bedding for you..."' (20) "'...so that you travel in its wide roads.

SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام REMINDS HIS PEOPLE ABOUT ALLĀH'S BOUNTIES TO THEM BUT THEY REFUSE TO LISTEN

Like many other previous Surahs, Surah Nūh discusses the story of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and the destruction of his people when they rejected his preaching. Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام was sent as a prophet approximately a thousand years after Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and he preached to his people for nine hundred and fifty years. His people were idol-worshippers who made their own idols, named them and worshipped them. Verse 23 of this Surah mentions some of the names of these idols. When Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام preached Oneness of Allah to them, they argued with him, as mentioned in Surah A'rāf and Surah Hūd.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام said to them, *"O my people! Indeed I am a clear warner to you. Worship Allāh, fear Him and obey me (by living your lives as I show you). Allāh will then forgive your sins and grant you respite until a specified period. Verily, when Allāh's specified period arrives, it is not delayed. If only you knew."* He told them that if they believed, Allāh would allow them to live comfortably until their destined hours of death when they would pass peacefully into the bliss of Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. However, he also reminded them that if they refused to believe, Allāh will punish them when a specific period arrives and there shall be nothing to postpone this period.

When his people refused to accept his teaching, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام supplicated to Allāh thus: *"O my Lord! I was not negligent in my duty) Indeed I called my people day and night. However, (the people were so averse that) my calling only made them run further away. Whenever I called them so that You may forgive them, they placed their fingers in their ears (so that they may not hear me), covered themselves with their shawls (so that they may not see me), remained implacable and expressed great pride."* Because of their pride, the people refused to listen to Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام.

Supplicating to Allāh, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام continued, *"I then called to them loudly and explained to them publicly and privately."* Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام explored every avenue of preaching but the people were adamant not to respond. He exhorted them, *"Seek forgiveness from your Lord. Indeed He is Most*

Forgiving. He will send rain to you in torrents (thus alleviating the drought), increase your wealth, your sons and make orchards and rivers for you." He explained to them that everything they had was a blessing from Allāh and that the signs of Allāh's greatness was all around them to see. Reminding them of this, he added, *"What is the matter with you that you are not convinced of Allāh's majesty when He has created you in so many phases?"* Man's existence begins with a drop of sperm. Thereafter, Allāh evolves it into a clot of blood once it fuses with the female gamete. Afterwards, Allāh makes the foetus develop, giving it its skeletal structure, flesh and organs. Despite having knowledge of Allāh's creative genius, man is foolish not to accept Him as Lord.

In addition to expounding the signs of Allāh's greatness in the creation of man, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام also pointed out other natural signs to them. He said to them, *"Have you not seen how Allāh has created the seven skies in layers, has made the moon a celestial light in them and the sun a lantern?"* Just as a house is illuminated by a lamp, so too is the earth illuminated by the light of the sun.

NOTE: The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* writes that Allāh has described the sun as a *"lantern"* because the light of the sun is fuelled from within without being a reflection of another light source. On the other hand, the light of the moon is described as *'nūr"* (translated above as *"celestial light")* because it is a soft light which is a reflection of the light of the sun.

Although the moon is located in the sky closest to us, Allāh says that He has placed it *"in them"* (i.e. in the skies). This term is used as a figure of speech and has no other implication. For example, if one says, *"Zaid is in Baghdad"*, it means that Zaid is located in a specific part of Baghdad and does not mean that he is everywhere in Baghdad.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام continued, *"Allāh has created you from the earth in a unique manner [when He created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام]. He will then return you to the earth (when you die) and then remove you from it in a unique manner."* When resurrection will take place on the Day of Judgment, Allāh will join the molecules of every body, bring them back to life and usher them to the Plains of Resurrection. By mentioning this to his people, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام reminded them of Judgment Day together with pointing out Allāh's greatness.

After discussing the heavens, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام turned their attention to the earth when he said, *"And Allāh has made the earth a bedding for you so that you travel in its wide roads."* Despite its spherical structure, Allāh has made the earth as flat as a bed for man so that he can travel easily throughout the earth to fulfil his various needs. Allāh has placed the earth at man's service so that he may derive benefit from its resources. Allāh says in Surah Mulk, *"It is He Who subjugated the earth for you so walk on its roads and eat from His sustenance."* [*Surah 67, verse 15*]

The above verse does not denote that the earth is flat and not spherical in shape. The same applies to other verses as well such as verse 6 of Surah Naba (*Surah 78*) and verse 20 of Surah Ghāshiya (*Surah 88*). These verses describe the earth from man's point of view as he stands on earth because it appears flat to him. These verses emphasise that although the earth is spherical in shape, Allāh

has not allowed this to affect man's existence on its surface. It should be noted that believing that the earth has a spherical shape or not believing this has no bearing on the Shari'ah. No verse of the Qur'ān refutes this belief.

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَن لَّمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُ وَوَلَدُهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿21﴾ وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا كُبَّارًا ﴿22﴾ وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا ﴿23﴾ وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا ﴿24﴾ مِّمَّا خَطِيئَاتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنصَارًا ﴿25﴾ وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ﴿26﴾ إِنَّكَ إِن تَذَرْهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوا إِلَّا فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا ﴿27﴾ رَّبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَن دَخَلَ بَيْتِيَ مُؤْمِنًا وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴿28﴾

(21) Nūh عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! They have refused to obey me and have followed him whose wealth and children have only increased his loss." (22) "They have devised mighty plots." (23) They say, 'Never forsake your gods! Do not forsake Wadd, Suwa, Yaghūth, Ya'ūq and Nasr! (24) "They have certainly led many astray. Do increase the deviation of the oppressors." (25) Because of their sins they were drowned and made to enter the Fire. (26) They found none to assist them against Allāh. Nūh عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! Leave not on earth even one of the disbelievers." (27) "Surely if You leave them they will mislead Your bondsmen and only sinners and disbelievers will be born to them." (28) "O my Lord! Forgive me, my parents, whoever enters my home as a believer and all the believing men and women. Increase the oppressors only in destruction!"

SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام FINALLY PRAYS FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS PEOPLE AND THEY ARE DROWNED

In the above verses, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام prays for the forgiveness of the believers and for the destruction of the disbelievers. He prayed to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! They (my people) have refused to obey me and have followed him whose wealth and children have only increased his loss.* "Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام mentioned that instead of following him, the people opted to follow the wealthy people of his nation. They always looked up to the rich because of their wealth and families and did whatever these people told them. The wealth and families of the wealthy therefore proved to be a loss not only for the wealthy but also for the masses who followed them. Neither did the wealth of the rich benefit the masses, nor did they enjoy any status with the rich. Following their commands only ensured that they remained as disbelievers.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام further said that the wealthy *"devised mighty plots"* to ensure that the masses remained devoted to their idols. They imposed on the others saying, *"Never forsake your gods! Do not forsake Wadd, Suwa, Yaghūth, Ya'ūq*

and Nasr!" As a result, *"They have certainly led many astray."* There was therefore no room for the masses to be reformed. Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام prayed to Allāh saying, *"Do increase the deviation of the oppressors."* They chose deviation instead of guidance and undertook to remain steadfast on disbelief. Deviation was therefore what they wanted.

Allāh revealed to Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, "None shall ever believe from your people besides those who have already believed." The number of those who believed was very few, as Allāh says in Surah Hūd, *"Only a few believed with him."* [*Surah 11, verse 40*]

Allāh then commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام to build an ark and to take on board all the believers as well as a pair of every land creature. Thereafter, Allāh rained water from the sky and in addition caused water to gush from the earth. Eventually all the disbelievers were drowned including the wife and a son of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام.

After preaching to his people with love for *950* years without receiving a decent response from them but enmity and ridicule instead, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام grew extremely despondent and his heart became detached from them. It was in this state that he prayed to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Leave not on earth even one of the disbelievers. Surely if You leave them they will mislead Your bondsmen and (there is no hope of their progeny accepting either because) only sinners and disbelievers will be born to them. O my Lord! Forgive me, my parents, whoever enters my home as a believer and all the believing men and women. Increase the oppressors only in destruction!"*

NOTE: Allāh mentions, *"Because of their sins they were drowned and made to enter the Fire."* Scholars mention that this verse proves that punishment in the grave is a reality because the words *"drowned"* and *"made to enter the Fire"* are both in the past tense. The Ahadīth also make it clear that the disbelievers and many sinful believers will be subjected to punishment in the grave because of their sins. It is evident that the people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام will suffer punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* which will be after resurrection. However, since the verse states that they have already been made to enter the Fire, this can only be taking place in the realm of *"Barzakh"* (the existence between the worldly life and the life of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, usually referring to the period within the grave). Refer to the commentary of verse 27 of Surah Ibrahīm (*Surah 14*) and the commentary of verse 46 of Surah Mu'min (*Surah 40*) for more details.

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سورة الجن

Makkan	Surah Al-Jinn	Verses 28

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ ٱسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْءَانًا عَجَبًا ﴿1﴾ يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلرُّشْدِ فَـَٔامَنَّا بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَن نُّشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَآ أَحَدًا ﴿2﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ تَعَٰلَىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا ٱتَّخَذَ صَٰحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ﴿3﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ شَطَطًا ﴿4﴾ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ أَن لَّن تَقُولَ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴿5﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ﴿6﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا۟ كَمَا ظَنَنتُمْ أَن لَّن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدًا ﴿7﴾ وَأَنَّا لَمَسْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ فَوَجَدْنَٰهَا مُلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهُبًا ﴿8﴾ وَأَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَٰعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ ۖ فَمَن يَسْتَمِعِ ٱلْـَٔانَ يَجِدْ لَهُۥ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا ﴿9﴾ وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِىٓ أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ﴿10﴾ وَأَنَّا مِنَّا ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ كُنَّا طَرَآئِقَ قِدَدًا ﴿11﴾ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ أَن لَّن نُّعْجِزَ ٱللَّهَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَن نُّعْجِزَهُۥ هَرَبًا ﴿12﴾ وَأَنَّا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ ۖ فَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِرَبِّهِۦ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا ﴿13﴾ وَأَنَّا مِنَّا ٱلْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا ٱلْقَٰسِطُونَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا۟ رَشَدًا ﴿14﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلْقَٰسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا۟ لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا ﴿15﴾ وَأَلَّوِ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقًا ﴿16﴾ لِّنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَن يُعْرِضْ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِۦ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا ﴿17﴾ وَأَنَّ ٱلْمَسَٰجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا۟ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿18﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا۟ يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا ﴿19﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Say, "Revelation has come to me that a group of Jinn attentively listened to

me and said, 'Indeed we have heard a most astounding Qur'ān. (2) "'It points towards the roads of guidance so we believed in it and we shall never ascribe any partner to our Lord. (3) "'Most exalted is the majesty of our Lord, Who has neither taken a wife nor a child."' (4) "'Undoubtedly, the ignorant among us used to say things about Allāh that transgresses the limit...'" (5) "...and we always thought that no human or Jinn could ever lie about Allāh."' (6) "'Indeed there were those from mankind who used to seek protection from men of the Jinn who increased them only in rebellion."' (7) "'They thought as you think that Allāh shall not resurrect anyone. "' (8) 'We have sought to reach the heavens but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. (9) "'Indeed we used to take up positions there to sit and eavesdrop. Now whoever eavesdrops will find a flaming fire lying in ambush for him."' (10) "'We have no idea whether evil is intended for those on earth or whether their Lord intends guidance for them. (11) "'Among us there are the righteous ones and those who are otherwise. We were of different ways."' (12) 'We know that we are unable to escape Allāh on earth and we shall never be able to escape from Him by fleeing. (13) "'Verily when we heard the guidance, we believed in it. Whoever believes in his Lord has neither loss nor oppression to fear. (14) "'Certainly some of us are Muslims while some of us are oppressors. Those who accept Islām have surely sought the path of good."' (15) "'As for the oppressors, they shall be fuel for Hell. (16) If they remain steadfast upon the path, We shall definitely bless them with abundant showers... (17) ... .to test them with it. Whoever is averse to the reminder of his Lord, We shall enter him into a severe punishment. (18) Indeed, prostration is only for Allāh, so do not supplicate to anyone else with Allāh. (19) When Allāh's slave stood up to call to Him, they densely crowd around him.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم RECITES THE QUR'ĀN TO A GROUP OF JINN WHO THEN INVITE THEIR PEOPLE TO ISLĀM

Allāh created the Jinn long before he created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and they lived on earth before man. Just like mankind, there are disbelievers and Muslims among them and they are also required to carry out Allāh's commands. Before the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Jinn used to listen to the discussions of the angels in the sky and learn about future events. They would then reveal the news to human fortune-tellers who would in turn relate it to people. When the events transpired as foretold, people became convinced that the fortune-tellers possessed knowledge of the unseen. In this manner, the Jinn and their compatriot fortune-telling human friends deceived people.

However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent to the world, the Jinn were barred from reaching the skies to eavesdrop on the conversations of the angels. Whenever any of them tried to eavesdrop thereafter, a flaming fire was thrown at him. A narration of Bukhari states that when the Jinn realised that they were no longer free to eavesdrop, they made groups to travel the length and breadth of the earth to investigate the cause for this new occurrence. One of the groups arrived at a place called Nakhla in Tihāma (the area in which Hijāz is situated). At that time, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was leading the Fajr Salāh there and the Jinn had the opportunity to hear the Qur'ān. They listened very attentively and concluded that it was the Qur'ān which prevented them from eavesdropping in the skies. They then returned to their fellow Jinn and said,

"Indeed we have heard a most astounding Qur'ān. It points towards the roads of guidance so we believed in it and we shall never ascribe any partner to our Lord." It was concerning this incident that Allāh revealed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the verses: *"Say, 'Revelation has come to me that a group of Jinn attentively listened to me..."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 732*]

When their free access to the havens was barred after the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Jinn continued to make attempts to eavesdrop. They would take up positions in the clouds and eagerly try to hear something. Those who managed to overhear something before being struck by the fire quickly passed the word to others waiting there and the word quickly found its way to fortune-tellers. Of course, what is overheard in the short duration was extremely little. They therefore mixed this with many lies before transmitting them to the fortune-tellers. This has been discussed in the commentaries of verses 16-18 of Surah Hijr (*Surah 15)*, verses 6-10 of Surah Sāffāt (*Surah 37*), and verse 5 of Surah Mulk (*Surah 67*).

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that some people asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to enlighten them about fortune-tellers. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"They are nothing."* It was then said that they sometimes do predict accurately. Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"That will be a statement that a Jinn has snatched up and whispered into his friend's ear, just as a fowl pecks at food. He then mixes it with over a hundred lies."* [*Mishkāt p. 393 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها also reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the angels descend to the clouds and discuss the decisions that Allāh had made. Whatever the Jinn overhear, they quickly pass onto fortune-tellers who add many lies to the news. [*"Mishkāt" p. 392 from Bukhari*]

Allāh Ta'āla narrates what the group of Jinn said to their fellow Jinn after listening to the Qur'ān. They said, *"Indeed we have heard a most astounding Qur'ān. It points towards the roads of guidance (Oneness of Allah) so we believed in it and (because we understand Oneness of Allah) we shall never ascribe any partner to our Lord. Most exalted is the majesty of our Lord, Who has neither taken a wife nor a child (as we previously believed). Undoubtedly, (we practised Polytheism because) the ignorant among us used to say things about Allāh that transgresses the limit and we always thought that no human or Jinn could ever lie about Allāh."* Because so many of the Jinn subscribed to Polytheism (*Shirk*), the others thought that it must be correct. However, this is no excuse to practise Polytheism (*Shirk*) because Allāh has given every man enough intelligence to understand the truth of Oneness of Allah and the fallacy of Polytheism (*Shirk*).

The Jinn continue, *"Indeed there were those from mankind who used to seek protection from men of the Jinn who increased them only in rebellion."* Whenever people of the past camped at an eerie place during the night, they used to call out to the leader of the Jinn in that vicinity saying, *"O leader of this valley! I seek your protection from the fools under your command."* Hearing this, the Jinn leaders would be flattered to think that man and Jinn fear them and beseech their help just as they would beseech Allāh's help when in need.

Addressing the Jinn further, the group said, *"They (humans) thought as you*

think that Allāh shall not resurrect anyone." However, they now realised that this belief was incorrect and that Judgment day will come whether people believe in it or not.

They continued, *"We have sought to reach the heavens (to eavesdrop) but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. Indeed we used to take up positions there (in the sky) to sit and eavesdrop. Now whoever eavesdrops will find a flaming fire lying in ambush for him."*

"'We have no idea whether evil is intended for those on earth or whether their Lord intends guidance for them."' The Jinn expressed that they had no idea whether the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would be widely accepted or whether people would reject his message. They could therefore not say whether people would deserve Allāh's grace or punishment in the end. The Jinn informed the others about this because as inhabitants of the earth, they would also be affected by the result of people's reaction to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They therefore warned the Jinn that since guidance had now come to them, they should take heed not to subject themselves to Allāh's punishment by rejecting the truth.

They said further, *"Among us there are the righteous ones and those who are otherwise (disbelievers and sinners). We were of different ways. (Therefore, many of us thought that we could escape Allāh 's punishment when it comes. However, now we know better.) We know that we are unable to escape Allāh on earth and we shall never be able to escape from Him by fleeing. (Wherever we go, Allāh still wields complete power over us)."*

"'Verily when we heard the guidance, we believed in it. Whoever believes in his Lord has neither loss nor oppression to fear." The believers will receive the rewards for their good deeds. It will never happen that a sincere good deed will be unrewarded or that a person (although a disbeliever) will be punished for a sin he did not commit. In fact, the rewards that a person will receive for good deeds will far outweigh the actual value of the deed. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Undoubtedly Allāh does not even oppress the weight of an atom. If it be a good deed, He shall multiply it and confer from His side a tremendous reward."*

Some commentators have interpreted the Arabic word *"rahaqa "* (translated above as *"oppression "*) to mean disgrace. Therefore, the believers have no disgrace to fear in the Hereafter.

The Muslim Jinn said further, *"Certainly some of us are Muslims while some of us are oppressors. Those who accept Islām have surely sought the path of good (by securing success in both worlds). As for the oppressors, they shall be fuel for Hell."*

Allāh Ta'āla continues, *"If they remain steadfast upon the path, We shall definitely bless them with abundant showers to test them with it."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this verse is linked to the first verse viz. "Say, *"Revelation has come to me that..."* Therefore, the verse reads: *"Say, 'Revelation has come to me that if they remain steadfast upon the path, We shall definitely bless them with abundant showers (of bounties) to test them with it."* Allāh showers bounties on people to see whether they express gratitude for these or not. Furthermore, *"Whoever is averse to the reminder of his Lord, We shall enter him into a severe punishment."*

Allāh asserts, *'indeed, prostration is only for Allāh, so do not supplicate to anyone else with Allāh."* This means that worship is reserved exclusively for Allāh. The verse makes it clear that it is not permissible to prostrate to any being besides Allāh even though the prostration is carried out for respect and not for worship. It was common in the past for people to prostrate before their kings and even today many so-called saints have their devotees prostrate to them when arriving or when leaving. Such practices are totally Harām (*unlawful*) and are tantamount to polytheism.

Some commentators have translated the word *"masājid"* (translated above as *"prostration")* as *"places of prostration"* (i.e. the plural of Masjid). This translation will have the same meaning as the above interpretation i.e. prostration (for which these places were built) should be for Allāh only. If one is travelling and stops for Salāh somewhere, the place will also be regarded as a *"place of prostration"* and the Salāh should be for Allāh only.

"When Allāh's slave stood up to call to Him, they densely crowd around him." Like the foregoing verses, this verse is also linked to first verse viz. *"Say, 'Revelation has come to me that...'"* The verse therefore means: *"Say, 'Revelation has come to me that when Allāh's slave* [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *stood up to call people to Allāh, they (the Jinn) densely crowd around him."* When the Jinn saw Salāh for the first time and heard the Qur'ān for the first time, they eagerly thronged around the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه say that the above verse refers to the Quraysh and the rest of the Arabs who thronged together to oppose the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he started to preach Oneness of Allah.

NOTE: Because the Arabs used to seek the protection of the Jinn when stopping over at a place on their journeys, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that whenever a person stops at a place while on journey, he should recite:

"I seek, the protection of Allāh's complete words from the evil of that which He had created"

When he recites this, Allāh will protect him from all harm until he leaves the place. [*Muslim*]

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَدْعُواْ رَبِّي وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٠﴾ قُلْ إِنِّي لَآ أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢١﴾
قُلْ إِنِّي لَن يُجِيرَنِي مِنَ ٱللَّهِ أَحَدٌ وَلَنْ أَجِدَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَّا بَلَٰغًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرِسَٰلَٰتِهِۦۚ وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا رَأَوْاْ مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ أَضْعَفُ نَاصِرًا وَأَقَلُّ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾ قُلْ إِنْ أَدْرِيٓ
أَقَرِيبٌ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُۥ رَبِّيٓ أَمَدًا ﴿٢٥﴾ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ

(20) Say, "I worship only my Lord and I do not ascribe any as His partner." (21) Say, "Indeed I have no power to do you any harm nor any good." (22) Say, "Without doubt, none can ever protect me from Allāh and I cannot find any refuge besides Him." (23) "(My responsibility is nothing) except transmitting from Allāh and fulfilling His messages. Whoever disobeys Allāh and His messenger shall have the fire of Hell where they will live forever." (24) When they see what they have been promised, they will realise who had the weakest assistant and whose numbers were fewer. (25) Say, "I do not know whether what you have been promised is near or whether your Lord has specified a lengthy term for it" (26) "He is the Knower of the unseen and He has informed no one about His unseen knowledge... (27) ...except His selected messengers." So He has dispatched guards in front of him and behind him... (28) ....so that He may know that they have conveyed the messages of their Lord. He has knowledge of their conditions and He keeps meticulous count of everything.

AN INVITATION TO ONENESS OF ALLAH AND EXONERATION FROM DISBELIEF

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Say, 'I worship, only my Lord and I do not ascribe any as His partner. (I therefore advise you with what I personally practise. Because I am also a human being just like the rest of you,) Indeed I have no power to do you any harm nor any good. (I am therefore unable to bring Allāh 's punishment to you as you request. Furthermore, If Allāh 's punishment has to afflict you, I cannot avert it. If I were to anger Allāh on any account,) Without doubt, none can ever protect me from Allāh and I cannot find any refuge besides Him. (I am unable to abandon my duty of prophethood and I cannot even alter the revelation I receive.) (My responsibility is nothing) except transmitting from Allāh and fulfilling His messages. (Remember,) Whoever disobeys Allāh and His messenger shall have the fire of Hell where they will live forever"'*

Allāh says further, *"When they (the disbelievers) see what they have been promised (Judgment day), they will realise who had the weakest assistant and whose numbers were fewer."* In this world, the disbelievers look down on the Muslims, thinking that they have weak allies and fewer numbers. On this account, they regard themselves as superior. However, they will realise the error of their ways on the Day of Judgment when the Muslims will emerge as the superior ones and will have each other to intercede for them. On the other hand, the disbelievers will have no allies to help them.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the disbelievers about Judgment day and the severity of the day, they mocked him by asking him to inform them of the exact date of Judgment Day! It was in response to such questions that Allāh revealed the verse: *"Say, 'I do not know whether what you have been promised*

(that is Judgment Day) is near or whether your Lord has specified a lengthy term for it. He is the Knower of the unseen and He has informed no one about His unseen knowledge except His selected messengers." Allāh sometimes informed the Prophets عليهم السلام about certain matters of the unseen so that their prophecies could convince people that they are certainly Allāh's messengers.

Allāh informs these Prophets عليهم السلام about the unseen via divine revelation. When Allāh sends this revelation to His prophet, He commissions *"guards (angels) in front of him and behind him"* i.e. all around him to ensure that no Satan can interfere with the revelation. Allāh Ta'āla had commissioned four angels to carry out this task for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh adopts these measures *"So that He may know (especially so that people may know) that they (the angels) have conveyed the messages of their Lord (without any interference). (Of course, nothing is hidden from Allāh because) He has knowledge of their conditions and He keeps meticulous count of everything."* Allāh has perfect knowledge of the angels He appoints and selects only those who are most capable. In addition to this, Allāh also knows exactly what revelation is being conveyed to the Prophets عليهم السلام.

The above verses reveal that Allāh has revealed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a great deal of knowledge about the unseen (which includes knowledge of the Shari'ah). However, Allāh did not inform him about the exact date of Judgment Day. Neither does this affect the status of his prophethood at all nor does it mean that Judgment Day will not take place. However, Allāh has revealed sufficient knowledge of Nabuwwah (prophethood) to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for people to successfully lead their lives. We should make every effort to practise this and should not delve into matters that have no relevance.

سورة المزمل

Makkan	Surah Al-Muzzammil	Verses 20

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمُزَّمِّلُ ﴿1﴾ قُمِ ٱلَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿2﴾ نِّصْفَهُۥٓ أَوِ ٱنقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ﴿3﴾ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿4﴾ إِنَّا سَنُلْقِى عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿5﴾ إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ ٱلَّيْلِ هِىَ أَشَدُّ وَطْـًٔا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ﴿6﴾ إِنَّ لَكَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ﴿7﴾ وَٱذْكُرِ ٱسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴿8﴾ رَّبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَٱتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴿9﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) O you wrapped in a cloth! (2) Stand up all night except a little while... (3) ...half the night or slightly less... (4) .. or add some more. And recite the Qur'ān steadily. (5) Verily We shall soon cast a weighty word upon you. (6) Undoubtedly, waking at night is extremely difficult but speech is most correctly spoken then. (7) You certainly have intensive work during the day. (8) Remember the name of your Lord and cut yourself off from everything to focus your attention solely on Him. (9) He is the Lord of the East and the West. There is none worthy of worship besides Him so adopt Him as your guardian.

THE COMMAND TO WORSHIP ALLĀH AT NIGHT AND TO TURN ONLY TO HIM

Although this Surah was revealed before the Hijrah (*migration*), some commentators mention that certain verses were revealed after the Hijrah. Scholars mention that whenever the polytheists said or did something that hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم very deeply, he would wrap himself up in a cloth. Addressing him by this description, Allāh says, *"O you wrapped in a cloth!"* This form of address is one of endearment and said in good nature just as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once addressed Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه by the name Abu Turāb (Father of sand) and addressed Sayyidina Hudhaifa رضى الله عنه by the name Noumān (one who sleeps a lot).

Once, when the polytheists called the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by an unpleasant name, Allāh revealed the above verses of the Qur'ān beginning with an affectionate term to annul the name that the polytheists used. Allāh instructs

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to perform Tahajjud (*A prayers said after midnight*) Salāh saying, *"Stand up all night except a little while, half the night or slightly less or add some more. And recite the Qur'ān steadily."* Allāh Ta'āla gave the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the option of spending half the night in Ibādah, less than half (one-third) or more than half (two-thirds).

Together with this command, Allāh adds, *"And recite the Qur'ān steadily."* Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to recite the Qur'ān so hastily that words are cut out and the proper meaning is not understood. Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always recited the Qur'ān steadily, the command is emphasised in this verse because Qirā'ah (recitation of the Qur'ān) is prolonged in the Tahajjud Salāh and during this time, the heart is attentive to the recitation. However, because one is also sleepy at this time, one should not hurry the Salāh in an effort to get to sleep earlier. Whatever one recites should be recited steadily and when one becomes sleepy, one should sleep. This is the instruction of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم according to a hadith of Bukhari and Muslim.

The Tahajjud Salāh is Sunnah for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and great virtues have been promised for performing it. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه quotes certain Scholars who state that the Tahajjud Salāh was Obligatory for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Tahajjud was Obligatory for all the Prophets عليهم السلام.

Reciting the Qur'ān steadily as commanded in the above verse refers to reciting the words of the Qur'ān clearly, ensuring that each letter is recited from its correct Makhraj (place in the mouth or throat from which the letter originates) and with all the correct qualities related to the letter. The Qurrā (experts in the science of Qur'ānic recitation) have classified three ways of reciting the Qur'ān. These are Tartīl, Tadwīr and Hadar. Tartīl denotes reciting the Qur'ān very slowly while Hadar refers to a very swift recitation. Tadwīr falls between the two i.e. neither very slowly nor very fast. One may recite the Qur'ān in any of these manners provided that one's recitation conforms with the rules for proper recitation of the Qur'ān (Tajwīd) and provided that no word is cut off while reciting.

The Qurrā have reported from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that reciting the Qur'ān *"steadily"* means that one should recite the words of the Qur'ān with Tajwīd (i.e. properly conforming with the rules of recitation).and one should recognise the appropriate halting places when reciting. It is unfortunate that it has become fashionable for people (even for so-called Qurrā) to *"eat"* many letters while reciting the Qur'ān. Among the many letters that such people *'feed"* on is the Alif, such as in the verse:

رَبَّنا اَبْصرنا وَسَمعنا فَا رجعْنا

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, Allāh continues, *"Verily We shall soon cast a weighty word upon you."* This verse refers to the revelation of the Qur'ān.

Allāh describes the Qur'ān as a *"weighty word"* because the effort of propagating the message of the Qur'ān was not easy. When this verse was revealed, much of the Qur'ān was still not revealed and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was still to receive much more opposition from the Polytheists.

The Qur'ān is also referred to as a *"weighty word"* because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was placed under severe pressure when the Qur'ān was revealed to him. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the colour of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم face would change when any verses of the Qur'ān were revealed. She says that when revelation was over, perspiration would be streaming down his face even during the severest winters. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 1*]

Sayyidina Zaid bin Thābit رضى الله عنه has also narrated that the thigh of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once on his leg when revelation of some Qur'ānic verses began. He says that he felt as if his leg would break with the weight that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم thigh exerted at that time.

Allāh continues, *"Undoubtedly, waking at night is extremely difficult"* i.e. difficult for the Nafs (carnal self). This difficulty is a fleeting difficulty of this world but the benefits that Tahajjud (*A prayer said after midnight*) earns one are tremendous. One will forget all these difficulties when one realises the marvellous bounties and ranks in Heaven that it secures for one. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that there are exquisite multi-storeyed palaces in Heaven that are transparent. These are reserved for those who feed others, who greet everyone with Salām and who perform Salāh at night when everyone else is sleeping. *["Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 1 p. 424]*

Allāh continues, *"but speech is most correctly spoken then."* At night there is no noise because people are asleep and one will not be disturbed as one is during the daytime. Therefore, it will be easier for one to concentrate on one's Ibādah (*worship*) during this time. One will then be able to recite Qirā'ah at leisure and take one's time to make supplication.

Allāh says to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"You certainly have intensive work during the day."* During the daytime, people have domestic, social and other duties to attend to and will therefore be unable to concentrate in their Ibādah (*worship*).

"Remember the name of your Lord..." Taking Allāh's name [*engaging in (remembrance of Allāh (Dhikr))*] is not restricted to Salāh but can be done at any time and at all times. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم engaged in remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* during all hours of the day. [Muslim]

"...and cut yourself off from everything to focus your attention solely on Him." When engaging in Ibādah (*worship*), one should focus complete attention on Allāh. The sign that one's complete attention is focussed on Allāh is that one's relationship with Allāh overpowers one's relationship with everyone else such as one's children, one's spouse, one's friends, etc. One will then not allow one's relationship with anyone else to hinder obedience to Allāh's laws. Although the person whose attention is always focussed on Allāh will be seen associating with people, his heart is turned towards Allāh. Such a person will please people

without violating Allāh's laws.

"He (Allāh) is the Lord of the East and the West. There is none worthy of worship besides Him so adopt Him as your guardian." This verse makes it clear that everything in the universe happens by Allāh's command and people should realise that they should worship Allāh only and that only He can assist them in all matters. They should ask all their needs only from Him.

وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ﴿١٠﴾ وَذَرْنِى وَٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُو۟لِى ٱلنَّعْمَةِ
وَمَهِّلْهُمْ قَلِيلًا ﴿١١﴾ إِنَّ لَدَيْنَآ أَنكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾ يَوْمَ
تَرْجُفُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ ٱلْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا ﴿١٤﴾

(10) Patiently bear whatever they say and separate from them in a most beautiful manner. (11) Leave me with the falsifiers who are blessed with bounties and grant them grace for a while. (12) Verily We have manacles, the Blazing fire... (13) .....food that gets stuck in the throat and a painful punishment. (14) (This punishment will take place) on the day that the earth and mountains will shake and the mountains will be reduced to a heap of dust.

ALLĀH ENJOINS THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم TO PATIENTLY BEAR THE HARASSMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS

In the above verses, Allāh Ta'āla consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him not to be grieved by the rejection of the polytheists. Engrossed in the bounties that Allāh had granted them, they refused to listen to the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, these bounties are temporary. Allāh granted them more of the world so that they can slip further into deviation and become deserving of Allāh's punishment in the Hereafter. The message of this verse is similar to that of verses 44 and 45 of Surah Qalam (*Surah 68*) where Allāh says, *"So leave Me and the one who falsifies this speech. We shall gradually lead them on in a manner that they do not realise. I am granting them respite. Indeed, My planning is formidable."*

Allāh then mentions the punishment that the people will receive who falsify the Qur'ān and the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says, *"Verily We have (in store for them) manacles, the Blazing fire, food that gets stuck in the throat and a painful punishment."*

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the hunger that the people of Hell will suffer will be so extreme that it will equal the other forms of punishment in Hell. When they will plead for food, they will be given Darī (*Thorny trees*) to eat, which will neither provide nutrition nor satisfy' their hunger. When they plead for food a second time, they will be given *'food that gets stuck in the throat"*. In an effort to get the food down their throats, they will recall that in this world they used to drink something in such a situation. They will then plead for something to drink. Boiling water will be given to them suspended on iron hooks. The water will be so hot that when it is brought close to their faces, their faces will be scalded. When they drink it, it will

incinerate their entrails. [*"Mishkāt" p. 504*]

Allāh continues, *"(This punishment will take place) on the day that the earth and mountains will shake and the mountains will be reduced to a heap of dust"* i.e. on the Day of Judgment. According to other commentators, the verse reads: *"Leave me with the falsifiers on the day that the earth and mountains will shake and the mountains will be reduced to a heap of dust."*

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَٰهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ﴿15﴾ فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ ٱلرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُ أَخْذًا وَبِيلًا ﴿16﴾ فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ ٱلْوِلْدَٰنَ شِيبًا ﴿17﴾ ٱلسَّمَآءُ مُنفَطِرٌۢ بِهِۦ ۚ كَانَ وَعْدُهُۥ مَفْعُولًا ﴿18﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۖ فَمَن شَآءَ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلًا ﴿19﴾

(15) Verily We have sent a messenger to you as a witness just as We sent a messenger to phara'oh (Fir'oun). (16) Phara'oh (Fir'oun) refused to obey the messenger so We seized him most severely. (17) So if you disbelieve, how will you save (yourselves) from the day that will turn children's hair white? (18) The sky will be cleft apart on that day. Allāh's promise always takes place. (19) This is advice indeed. So whoever wishes to do so, should adopt a path to his Lord.

THOSE WHO DISBELIEVE WILL BE PUNISHED LIKE PHARA'OH *(FIR'OUN)* AS WELL AS RECEIVE SEVERE PUNISHMENT ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Allāh reminds people that just as He sent Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to phara'oh *(Fir'oun)*, He also sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who will be a witness against them on the Day of Judgment if they do not believe. Mankind should take a lesson from what happened to phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his army when they refused to believe Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. They should be cautious not to suffer the same punishment in this world, which could well afflict anyone who disbelieves in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In addition to the punishment they received in this world, they will also suffer punishment on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh describes the Day of Judgment as a day so frightening that children will even grow old because of fear. This expression is metaphorical and used to highlight the severity of the Day of Judgment. Other commentators state that children will grow old on that Day of Judgment because it will be so long.

"This is advice indeed. So whoever wishes to do so, should adopt a path to his Lord" i.e. a path that leads to His pleasure and which will lead one to Heaven. This path refers to Islām.

۞ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِن ثُلُثَىِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُۥ وَثُلُثَهُۥ وَطَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مَعَكَ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ

يُقَدِّرُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ عَلِمَ أَن لَّن تُحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَٱقْرَءُوا۟ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ ٱلْقُرْءَانِ عَلِمَ أَن
سَيَكُونُ مِنكُم مَّرْضَىٰ وَءَاخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَءَاخَرُونَ يُقَٰتِلُونَ
فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَٱقْرَءُوا۟ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا۟ لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (20)

(20) Verily your Lord knows that you and a group of those with you stand (in worship) close to two-thirds of the night, half the night and a third. Allāh determines the night and the day. He knows that you are unable to precisely calculate (the duration of each portion of the night) so He has turned to you in mercy. Therefore, recite that part of the Qur'ān which is easy. Allāh knows that some of you may fall ill, others will travel in the world in search of Allāh's bounty and others will fight in Allāh's path. So recite that of the Qur'ān which is easy, establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and give to Allāh a good loan. Whatever good you send ahead for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh in a better and more rewarding state. Seek forgiveness from Allāh. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

CONCESSION IN TAHAJJUD (*A PRAYER SAID AFTER MIDNIGHT*) AND THE COMMAND TO ESTABLISH SALĀH, PAY ZAKĀH AND SPEND IN CHARITY

At the beginning of the Surah, Allāh Ta'āla gave the believers a choice concerning the duration of their Tahajjud Salāh (*A prayer said after midnight*) i.e. two-thirds, half or one-third of the night. 'Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه states that when Allāh revealed the verses *"Stand up all night except a little while; half the night or slightly less or add some more"* the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضي الله عنهم found it difficult to precisely calculate two-thirds, half or one-third of the night. Fearing that they should miscalculate and fail to stand for the stipulated periods, the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضي الله عنهم therefore stood in Salāh the entire night until the break of dawn. As a result of this exertion, their feet used to swell and they grew extremely pale.

Taking pity on them, Allāh Ta'āla revealed the verse *"Verily your Lord knows that you and a group of those with you stand (in worship) close to two-thirds of the night, (others stand) half the night and (others) a third."* Allāh therefore made it easier for the Muslims and commanded them to *"recite that part of the Qur'ān which is easy"*. Therefore, instead of having to remain in Salāh for an entire half, two-thirds or a third of the night, they were now permitted to recite as much as they could manage. There was now no fixed portion of the night during which they were constrained to engage in Ibādah (*worship*).

The first reason that Allāh cites for the concession granted is that *"He knows that you are unable to precisely calculate (the duration of each portion of the night) so He has turned to you in mercy."* The second reason for the concession is mentioned

thereafter where Allāh says, *"Allāh knows that some of you may fall ill, others will travel in the world in search of Allāh's bounty (i.e. in search of their livelihood) and others will fight in Allāh's path."* Because people in these conditions will find it difficult to perform the Tahajjud Salāh and to adhere to fixed durations of the night, Allāh Ta'āla has made the Tahajjud Salāh Mustahab (*preferable*) without stipulating a fixed portion of the night in which the Salāh should be completed.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sheikh Abu Nasr Qushayri رحمة الله عليه that it is commonly believed that the compulsion to perform the Tahajjud Salāh (*A prayer said after midnight*) no longer applied to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but the compulsion still applied to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself. Some Scholars are of the opinion that the compulsion still applies to the Ummah but it was only the stipulation of a fixed portion of the night that no longer applied.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها that the opening verses of Surah Muzzammil had made Tahajjud Salāh compulsory for the Muslims. Consequently, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم performed the Salāh consistently for twelve months before the final verse of the Surah was revealed to remove the compulsion. Tahajjud then became optional. According to another narration, it was eighteen months before the closing portion of the Surah was revealed.

Allāh commands the Muslims further by saying, *"So recite that of the Qur'ān which is easy, establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and give to Allāh a good loan."* Allāh enjoins Muslims to spend their wealth on His creation and in avenues that are pleasing to Him. Although the wealth people have actually belongs to Allāh and they are also Allāh's creation, Allāh is generous enough to reward us abundantly for spending in His way. In addition to this, Allāh refers to this as a *"loan"*. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Who is it that will lend to Allah a good loan so that Allah may increase it manifold?"* [*Surah 2, verse 245*]

Allāh Ta'āla concludes the Surah by saying, *"Whatever good you send ahead for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh in a better and more rewarding state. Seek forgiveness from Allāh. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* One should seek Allāh's pardon after every good deed because one does not know what faults may exist in one's deeds.

Makkan	Surah Al-Muddaththir	Verses 56

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) O you wrapped in garments. (2) Stand up and warn. (3) Announce the greatness of your Lord. (4) Keep your clothing clean. (5) Stay away from sin. (6) Do not give to others with the intention of receiving more back. (7) Be patient for the sake of your Lord.

THE COMMAND TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم TO PREACH

In a narration of Bukhari (*v. 1 p. 2*), Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in the cave of Hira when divine revelation came to him for the first time.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to frequent the cave and take food along with him because he would spend many days there. One day, an angel approached him in the cave and said, *"Read!"* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he was unlettered and therefore unable to read, the angel embraced The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so hard that he experienced great difficulty. Thereafter, the angel repeated the command to read and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave the same reply. For the second time, the angel embraced the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the same manner. When he released the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he repeated the question. Again the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he was unable to read and again the angel embraced him. Thereafter, the angel said, *"Read in the name of your Lord Who created man from a clot of blood"*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repeated what the angel said and then the angel left. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم immediately left for home in a very frightened state. He said to his wife Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها, *"Cover me! Cover me!"* When she covered him, he lay down for a while until the fear subsided. Thereafter, no revelation was forthcoming for some time. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 376*]

Sayyidina Jābir bin Abdillāh رضی الله عنه narrates that during this period, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم once heard a voice calling him from the sky. When he looked up he saw the same angel who came to him in the cave of Hira. The angel was sitting on a chair and filled the space between the sky and the earth. Overcome with fear, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم returned home and again said to his wife Sayyidah Khadīja رضی الله عنها, *"Cover me! Cover me!"* It was then that Allāh revealed the verses, *"O you wrapped in garments. Stand up and warn. Announce the greatness of your Lord. Keep your clothing clean. Stay away from sin."* After this, revelation continued to come to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم until he passed away. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 3*]

Because the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was wrapped up in a shawl at that time, Allāh address him saying, *"O you wrapped in garments."* Allāh further commanded the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم to propagate Oneness of Allah when He says, *"Stand up and warn."* The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was a warner as well as a giver of glad tidings but because warning people against Polytheism was more necessary during the early years of propagation, Allāh instructed him to do only this.

"Announce the greatness of your Lord." This is an instruction to propagate the grandeur of Allāh after being convinced himself. This announcement takes place at the beginning of Sarah and during the Salāh when one says *"Allāhu Akbar" ("Allāh is the Greatest")*.

"Keep your clothing clean." Although this command refers to the physical purity of one's clothing, Scholars have deduced that it also refers to spiritual purity because on occasions when physical impurity is not permitted, spiritual impurity can also not be permitted.

Allāh commands further, *"Stay away from sin."* This command makes reference to purity of one's limbs because sins are generally carried out with the limbs. Some commentators mention that *"sin"* in this context refers specifically to idol-worship. Although the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم never worshipped idols at all during his life, this command is actually directed to the Polytheists. The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that *"sin"* refers 'to the attraction of this world which is the greatest idol that people worship. Whereas idols are worshipped only in confined areas like temples, the world is worshipped everywhere, including in many Masājid. It is for the love of this world that many Masājid are built and many wars are fought. In fact, many people even recite the Qur'ān for worldly gain and propagate the religion for the same objective. Like these, there are so many other good deeds that many people carry out for worldly gain. Such deeds translate into worship of the world.

"Do not give to others with the intention of receiving more back." Whatever one gives to another should not be given with the motive that the person will repay more than what is due. Neither should such a clause be desired nor stated. Whatever one gives should be given only for Allāh's pleasure. Describing His sincere bondsmen in Surah Dahar Allāh says, *"Despite their love (need) for food, they feed the poor, the orphan and the captive and say, 'We feed you only for Allāh's pleasure and desire neither a return, nor thanks from you.'"* This verse tells us that let alone expecting recompense from the recipient, one should not even desire that

the recipient says a word of thanks.

"Be patient for the sake of your Lord." Because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was charged with propagating the Religion, he could expect opposition from the Polytheists. Allāh therefore enjoins him to endure the opposition with patience and that the patience should be exercised for Allāh's pleasure. Patience endured for Allāh's pleasure will earn one tremendous rewards and the thought of this reward eases the task of being patient. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"The patient ones shall be granted their reward without reservation."* [*Surah 39, verse 10*]

(8) When the trumpet is blown... (9) ...that day will be an extremely severe day... (10) ...for the disbelievers and will not be easy. (11) Leave Me with the one whom I have created single-handedly... (12) ...and to whom I have granted ever increasing wealth... (13) ...sons who live with him... (14) ...and for whom I have prepared every type of amenity. (15) He then wishes that I grant him even more. (16) Never! He was certainly opposed to Our verses. (17) I shall soon make him climb a mountain of Hell. (18) Verily, he thought and devised something. (19) May he be destroyed! How does he plot? (20) May he be destroyed again! How does he plot? (21) He looked... (22) ..and then frowned and scowled (23) Then he turned away and was proud. (24) He said, "This is nothing but magic recounted from the past." (25) "This is nothing but the word of man." (26) I shall soon enter him into Hell. (27) What shall inform you what Hell is? (28) It neither spares nor leaves. (29) It distorts the body. (30) Nineteen angels are commissioned over it.

THE EVIL OF THE POLYTHEISTS AND THE WARNING OI PUNISHMENT

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه narrates in *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* (*v. 4 p. 415*) tha Walīd bin Mughiera was once in the Masjidul Harām when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the first two verses of Surah Ghāfir to him. Walīd was moved by the verses. Noticing this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repeated the verses. After listening to them, Walīd left. When he met with his tribe the Banu Makhzūm, he told them that he had just heard such a speech from Muhammad

صلى الله عليه وسلم that was neither the speech of man nor Jinn and which was extremely sweet.

When the Quraysh heard about this, they grew concerned that if Walīd were to accept Islām, the rest of the Quraysh would soon follow suit. Abu Jahl put them at ease saying that he would solve the problem for them. He then went to Walīd and sat beside him, pretending to be extremely sad. Walīd asked, *"What is the matter dear cousin? Why are you so sad?"* Abu Jahl said, *"The Quraysh had decided to amass wealth for you and to assist you until old age. Now they think that you listen to Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and that you go to him. The son of Abu Quhāfa [i.e. Sayyidina Abu Bakr* رضى الله عنه*] is also there and you eat with them."*

Walīd did not like what he heard and said, "How can the Quraysh think this? Do they not know that I am superior to them. Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his companions rarely eat a full stomach (Where will they have food to feed me?)" Walīd then accompanied Abu Jahl to a gathering of the Quraysh and said, "You people say that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is insane. Did you ever see him strangle himself?" When they replied in the negative, he continued, "You people claim that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is fortune-teller. Did you ever hear him speak like a fortune-teller?" When they again replied in the negative, he said, "You say that he is a poet. Did you ever hear him recite poetry?" When they declared that they had not, he added, "You say that he is a liar. Have you ever heard him speak a lie in his life?" They were forced to concede that they had never heard him speak a lie. In fact, they had given him the title of Al Amīn (The Trustworthy).

When the Quraysh asked him what was his opinion about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Walīd said, "I think that he is certainly a magician. Do you not see how his speech separates husband from wife and father from son?"

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that Abu Jahl told Walīd that the Quraysh would not be satisfied with Walīd until he says something about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that makes it evident that he is not following the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Walīd asked for a period of grace to consider the matter and then later declared before the Quraysh that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a magician.

Walīd bin Mughiera was extremely wealthy. He owned fields, dairy animals, orchards, businesses and many slaves. In addition to this, he had ten sons who were always at his service. Whenever Heaven was mentioned before him, he would say, *"If Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *is true, then Heaven was created for me."* With the above details in mind, we will now discuss the commentary of the verses of this Surah.

Allāh begins by discussing Judgment Day when He says, *"When the trumpet is blown, that day will be an extremely severe day for the disbelievers and will not be easy."*

Allāh then speaks about Walīd bin Mughiera when He says, *"Leave Me with the one whom I have created single-handedly. ..*"i.e. leave him to Me to punish him. No one assisted Allāh in creating Walīd and therefore Allāh does not need to consult with anyone when He wishes to punish. The verse may also be translated as:

"Leave Me with the one whom I have created alone ..." i.e. I created him without the wealth and family he now boasts about. Allāh recounts the bounties that He blessed Walīd with. Allāh further says about Walīd that he is one, *"whom I have granted ever increasing wealth, sons who live with him, and for whom I have prepared every type of amenity."*

Allāh continues, *"He then wishes that I grant him even more. Never!"* This verse denies that Walīd will ever receive more in this world and also denies that he will receive anything in the Hereafter as he claimed when he said that Heaven was created for him. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports that after this verse was revealed, Walīd suffered repeated losses in his wealth and in his family until he was finally killed in the Battle of Badr. According to another report, the king of Abysinnia had him killed.

Describing the punishment that Walīd will suffer in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, Allāh says, *"I shall soon make him climb a mountain of Hell."* Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the mountain is a mountain of fire that will take a person in Hell seventy years climb and another seventy years to descend. This will continue forever without any respite. [*Tirmidhi*]

Referring to the time when Walīd said that he needed some time to think about what to say to slander the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Verily, he thought and devised something. May he be destroyed! How does he plot? May he be destroyed again! How does he plot? He looked and then frowned and scowled. Then he turned away and was proud. He said, 'This is nothing but magic recounted from the past. This is nothing but the word of man."*

Allāh further speaks about the punishment that Walīd will be made to suffer. Allāh says, *"I shall soon enter him into Hell. What shall inform you what Hell is? It neither spares nor leaves (anyone). It distorts the body. Nineteen angels are commissioned (as keepers) over it (Hell)."*

وَمَا جَعَلْنَآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلنَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَٰٓئِكَةً ۙ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِيَسْتَيْقِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَيَزْدَادَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنًا ۙ وَلَا يَرْتَابَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۙ وَلِيَقُولَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ مَاذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَٰذَا مَثَلًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَمَا هِىَ إِلَّا ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٣١﴾

(31) We have made only angels the keepers of the Fire. We have made their number only a test for the disbelievers so that the People of the Book may be convinced and so that the believers may be increased in faith. So that the People of the Book and the believers may not doubt and so that those with diseased hearts and the disbelievers may say, "What does Allāh intend with this strange example?" Thus does Allāh send astray whoever He wills and guides whoever He wills. Only He knows the armies of your Lord. This is certainly Advice for mankind.

THE NUMBER OF ANGELS IN CHARGE OF HELL

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that when Allāh revealed the verse: "Nineteen angels are commissioned over it" Abu Jahl said to the Quraysh, "Shame on you! Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم tells you that nineteen angels are commissioned as keepers of Hell. Brave as you are, will you take punishment from them? Will ten of you not be sufficient to overcome one angel?" A person by the name of Usayd bin Kalda was also present there. He said, "I shall take care of seventeen angels. Ten will be on my back and seven on my stomach. You finish off the other two."

According to another narration, he said, "I shall walk ahead of you across the bridge of Sirāt. I will push aside ten angels with my right shoulder and the other nine with my left shoulder. We will then cross over the bridge and enter Heaven." It was then that Allāh Ta'āla revealed the verse, *"We have made only angels the keepers of the Fire."* In this verse, Allāh Ta'āla makes it clear that the keepers of Heaven are not like ordinary human beings who can be shoved about. The angels have strength of immense proportion. A narration states that the strength of a single angel is equal to the strength of all mankind and Jinn put together. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 6 p. 284*]

Allāh continues, *"We have made their number only a test for the disbelievers..."* i.e. to test who will deny it, thereby plunging himself into further deviation. In addition to this, Allāh has specified their number *"So that the People of the Book (the Jews and Christians) may be convinced"* that the Qur'ān is truly Allāh's scripture because their scriptures also mentioned that the guardian angels of Hell are nineteen in number. Allāh also revealed the number *"so that the believers may be increased in faith (and) So that the People of the Book and the believers may not doubt"* that the number is indeed nineteen.

Another reason for specifying the number is *"so that those with diseased hearts and the disbelievers may say, 'What does Allāh intend with this strange example?' Thus does Allāh send astray whoever He wills and guides whoever He wills."* Those with Belief will never object to something that Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say. It is only those with hypocrisy or disbelief lurking in their hearts who will raise objections.

"Only He knows the armies of your Lord." Some commentators state that this verse was revealed in response to the statement of the polytheists who said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has only nineteen assistants. Allāh tells them that His armies are so large that only He has knowledge of them.

The nineteen angels mentioned in the verse are the principal keepers of Hell. These angels have many aides who are appointed to carry out various tasks in Hell. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Hell will be brought on the Day of Judgment with seventy thousand leashes restraining it and there will be seventy thousand angels holding each leash.

"This is certainly Advice for mankind." Allāh has mentioned Hell and described it for people so that they take heed and take precautions to avoid it by accepting Islām and adhering to its principles and practices. However, some

people are so unfortunate that they are never inspired to believe despite repeated cautions.

كلا والقمر (32) واليل إذ أدبر (33) والصبح إذا أسفر (34) إنها لإحدى الكبر (35) نذيرا
للبشر (36) لمن شاء منكم أن يتقدم أو يتأخر (37) كل نفس بما كسبت رهينة (38) إلا
أصحب اليمين (39) في جنت يتساءلون (40) عن المجرمين (41) ما سلككم في سقر (42)
قالوا لم نك من المصلين (43) ولم نك نطعم المسكين (44) وكنا نخوض مع الخائضين
(45) وكنا نكذب بيوم الدين (46) حتى أتىنا اليقين (47) فما تنفعهم شفعة الشفعين
(48) فما لهم عن التذكرة معرضين (49) كأنهم حمر مستنفرة (50) فرت من قسورة
(51) بل يريد كل امرئ منهم أن يؤتى صحفا منشرة (52) كلا بل لا يخافون الآخرة
(53) كلا إنه تذكرة (54) فمن شاء ذكره (55) وما يذكرون إلا أن يشاء الله
هو أهل التقوى وأهل المغفرة (56)

(32) Indeed, by the oath of the moon! (33) And by the oath of the night when it retreats! (34) And by the oath of the morning when gets bright! (35) undoubtedly Hell is among the gravest matters. (36) A warning for mankind.. (37) ...for those of you who wish to advance and those who wish to retreat. (38) Every soul is a pawn for his deeds... (39) ...except for the people of the right. (40) They will be in gardens asking... (41) . .from the sinners. (42) "What has landed you in Hell?" (43) They will reply, "We were not among those who performed Salāh..." (44) "...and we did not feed the poor. (45) "We used to be absorbed with those who were absorbed..." (46) "...and we used to deny the Day of Reckoning..." (47) "....until death came to us." (48) The intercession of intercessors will not help them. (49) What is the matter with them that they are so averse to the Advice... (50) ... that they seem like wild donkeys... (51) . . fleeing from a lion? (52) In fact, each one of them wants to be given open scriptures. (53) Never! The fact is that they have no fear for the Hereafter. (54) Behold! This is the Advice. (55) So whoever wills should take heed. (56) They cannot take heed unless Allāh wills. It is He Who should be feared and Who forgives.

THE SINNERS WILL BE ASKED WHAT LANDED THEM IN HELL

Taking oaths on the moon, the night and the day, Allāh asserts that the punishment of Hell is a grave matter that should not be treated lightly. The warnings that Allāh and His Prophets عليهم السلام have sounded in this regard are absolutely true and people should heed them. Allāh. Says that these warnings are *'for those of you who wish to advance and those who wish to retreat."* Therefore each person should evaluate his deeds to ascertain whether his deeds are advancing him in faith or whether they are causing him to decline in faith and

status in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).*

"Every soul is a pawn for his deeds..." Just as an article is retained by a pawnbroker as a pawn until a loan is repaid, every soul will be detained until an account of its deeds is given. Because the worst of sins are disbelief and polytheism, the disbelievers and Polytheists will be held back in Hell forever. They will not be released just as a pawnbroker will not release an article if the loan is not repaid. Neither will intercession be accepted on their behalf nor will they be able to offer any ransom for their souls. As for those believers who sinned, they will be saved from Hell either:

- *because their good deeds are more than their sins, or by the intercession of others, or*
- *after paying back the rights they owed to other people, or solely by the grace of Allāh.*

Many people will be refused permission to enter Heaven because they owe many rights to others. On the Day of Judgment they will have to repay these rights by forfeiting their good deeds. However, if their good deeds are depleted before the rights are paid, they will have to bear the burden of the sins that the oppressed party committed. This will eventually land them in Hell. *["Mishkāt" p. 435 from Muslim]*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Unays رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the Day of Judgment, Allāh will gather all His slaves who will be naked and without any possessions. They will then be addressed in a manner that those far away will hear just as clearly as those who are nearby. Allāh will then say, *"I am the Judge. I am the King. No person from the people of Hell shall ever enter Hell until I avenge the right owed to him by a person from Heaven and no person from the people of Heaven shall ever enter Heaven until I avenge the right that he owes to a person from Hell; even though it be a slap."* The prophet's companions *(Sahābah)*رضى الله عنهم asked, *"O the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*! How will he be able to compensate the wrong when everyone will be naked and without anything?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"By good deeds and sins." ["At Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 4 p. 404]*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person who wrongfully lashed his slave even once will have to compensate for it on the Day of Judgment."* [*"At Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 4 p. 403*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if a child owes his parent some money, the parent will claim the debt on the Day of Judgment. The child will tell the parent, *"But I am your child"* However, this will make no difference to the parent, who will still demand payment. In fact, the parent will wish that the child owed him more. [*"At Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 4 p. 405*]

Allāh says further that everyone will be a pawn for his deeds *"except for the people of the right."* Because of their Belief and good deeds, these fortunate people will not be detained on the Plain of Reckoning and there will be nothing to prevent their entry into Heaven. Verses 27-40 of Surah Wāqi'ah (*Surah 56*)

describe who the *'people of the right"* are. In this Surah, Allāh says about the *"people of the right"* that *"They will be in gardens asking from the sinners, 'What has landed you in Hell?' They will reply, 'We were not among those who performed Salāh and we did not feed the poor. We used to be absorbed with those who were absorbed and we used to deny the Day of Reckoning until death came to us.'"* These people used to be absorbed in speaking ill of Islām and in plotting schemes against Islām. It is evident that these people were disbelievers and actively engaged in opposing Islām.

Concerning these unfortunate people, Allāh says, *"The intercession of intercessors will not help them."* There will be none to intercede on behalf of the disbelievers to get them released from Hell. Allāh says in Surah Mu'min, *"The oppressors shall have no friend, nor any intercessor who will be obeyed." In* this world, these people were averse to the advice given to them in the Qur'ān. In fact, they were so averse that they appeared to be like *"wild donkeys fleeing from a lion?"*

"In fact, each one of them wants to be given open scriptures. Never!" Allāh says that these people had no intention of believing the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but made impossible requests to him. They used to tell the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they would believe that he is Allāh's prophet only if there appeared a scripture by the head of each one of them when he awakes in the morning, telling them that he is Allāh's messenger and that they should follow him. This was just an excuse that they used and this behaviour plunged them further into disbelief. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 6 p. 286*]

"The fact is that they have no fear for the Hereafter." These people did not accept Islām and behaved in this manner because they did not fear punishment in the Hereafter.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Behold! This is the Advice. So whoever wills should take heed. They cannot take heed unless Allāh wills. It is He Who should be feared and Who forgives."* Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that after reciting the above verse the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Your Lord said, 'I ought to be feared so do not ascribe partners to Me. The person who fears Me and does not ascribe partners to Me deserves forgiveness." [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 29 p. 154*]

سورة القيٰمة

Makkan	Surah Al-Qiyāmah	Verses 40

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَا أُقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ (1) وَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ (2) أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنسَانُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ (3) بَلَىٰ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَن نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ (4) بَلْ يُرِيدُ الْإِنسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ (5) يَسْأَلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ (6) فَإِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ (7) وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ (8) وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ (9) يَقُولُ الْإِنسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفَرُّ (10) كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ (11) إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ (12) يُنَبَّأُ الْإِنسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ (13) بَلِ الْإِنسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ (14) وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُ (15)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) I swear by the Day of Judgment! (2) And I swear by the chiding soul! (3) Does man think that We shall never gather his bones? (4) We most certainly will! We have the power to perfect even his fingertips. (5) The fact is that man wants to sin in his life ahead of him. (6) He asks, "When will the Day of Judgment come?" (7) When eyes will be bewildered... (8) ....the moon will eclipse... (9) . . .and the sun and moon will be joined... (10) ...man will say on that day, "Where is an escape?" (11) No! There is no place of safety. (12) On this day, the only abode shall be towards your Lord. (13) On that day man will be informed of whatever he sent ahead and left behind. (14) In reality, man will be well aware of himself... (15) .. . even though he will make excuses.

MAN WILL HAVE NO ESCAPE ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT BUT WILL STILL MAKE EXCUSES FOR HIS SINS

Surah Qiyāmah describes the events on the Day of Judgment and when a person dies. This Surah creates within a person concern for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).*

The Polytheists of Makkah denied the coming of Judgment Day and used to say that it is not possible for decomposed bones to be assembled into a complete human being. A person by the name of Adi bin Rabī'ah once asked *"O*

Muhammad صلى الله عليه سلم*! Inform me when Judgment Day will take place, how it will take place and what will happen then."* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed him about Judgment Day, he said, *"I will not believe you even of I have to witness this day unless Allāh gathers together some bones."* Other commentators state that Abu Jahl sneered, *"Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *claims that Allāh will gather bones together after they have decomposed"*

Allāh refutes the scepticism of these polytheists when He asserts, *"I swear by the Day of Judgment! And I swear by the chiding soul."* Here Allāh refers to the soul that regrets the sins that it commits and when it does good, it also chides itself for not being sincere enough and for not fulfilling all the etiquette of the deed. By taking these oaths, Allāh asserts that people will definitely be resurrected on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh continues, *"Does man think that We shall never gather his bones? We most certainly will! We have the power to perfect even his fingertips."* Let alone gathering man's bones together, Allāh has the power to perfectly reconstruct every part of the man's body up to the minutest detail of the fingertips and individual fingerprints.

"The fact is that man wants to sin in his life ahead of him. He asks, "When will the Day of Judgment come?" The disbelievers ask about the Day of Judgment with the intention of refuting it because they do not want to stop sinning. They know that if they accept that Judgment Day will take place, they will have to prepare for it by carrying out good deeds and leading a life of abstinence. However, they fail to realise that whatever Allāh has decreed will certainly take place whether they believe it or not. Judgment Day will not be cancelled because they deny it.

"When eyes will be bewildered, the moon will eclipse, and the sun and moon will be joined (with neither one having any light), man will say on that day, 'Where is an escape? No! There is no place of safety. On this day, the only abode shall be towards your Lord." Every person will have to remain where Allāh decides that he should be.

"On that day man will be informed of whatever he sent ahead and left behind" Every deed that a person carried out in the world will be recorded in his record of deeds given to him. *"In reality, man will be well aware of himself even though he will make excuses."* Every man knows what he does in this world and he will recall his deeds in the Hereafter. In addition to this, his limbs will also testify to his deeds. Regardless of the excuses they make, *"On this day, the excuses of the oppressors will not profit them."*

Some commentators have translated the verse as: *"In reality, man will be well aware of himself even though he cast veils (when committing sins, thinking that none will see him)."* However, man fails to realise that in this situation, his own body is present and that it will eventually testify against him.

(16) Do not move your tongue with the Qur'ān to hasten it. (17) Verily, it is Our

responsibility to collect it and to make you recite it. (18) So when We have recited it, follow its recitation. (19) Thereafter, it is responsibility to make it clear.

ALLĀH TELLS THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم TO RECITE THE QUR'ĀN ONLY AFTER LISTENING TO IT ATTENTIVELY

In the above verse, Allāh Ta'āla commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the usual affectionate manner. Explaining the circumstances of revelation, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that when revelation used to come to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he would try to repeat the words immediately upon hearing them, fearing that he would forget them. In this manner, the strain would be multiplied. Advising him not to exert himself so much, Allāh said, *"Do not move your tongue with the Qur'ān to hasten it. Verily, it is Our responsibility to collect it (in your heart) and to make you recite it. So when We have recited it follow its recitation."* Allāh commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to first listen attentively to the recitation of the Qur'ān and then to repeat the words.

"Thereafter, it is Our responsibility to make it clear" i.e. We will ensure that you are able to recite it clearly to people and to convey it to them.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that after this verse was revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would first listen to Jibrīl عليه السلام. Thereafter, he would recite it exactly as Jibrīl عليه السلام had recited it. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 3 and v. 2 p. 733*]

(20) It shall not be. The fact is that you love this world... (21) .. .and you forsake the Hereafter. (22) Many faces on that day will be resplendent... (23) ...beholding the sight of their Lord. (24) And many faces on that day will be gloomy... (25) .. .sensing that they will be dealt with most severely. (26) It will never be. Undoubtedly, when the soul reaches the collar-bone... (27) .... and it is said, "Who can cure him?" (28) ... and he is certain that this is really the parting... (29) .... and when one leg is joined with the other... (30) .... then on this day you will be drawn towards your Lord.

THE CONDITION OF PEOPLE WHEN THEY DIE AND THE APPEARANCE OF THEIR FACES ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

After simplifying matters for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and instructing him to first listen to the recitation of the Qur'ān before reciting it, Allāh Ta'āla

resumes the discussion concerning Judgment Day. Allāh asserts, *"It shall not be"* i.e. those who deny the Qur'ān will not accept the truth. The advent of Judgment Day will neither be cancelled not postponed because of their rejection.

Allāh Ta'āla then explains the reason for which the disbelievers are averse to accepting Islām. Addressing them, Allāh says, *"The fact is that you love this world and you forsake the Hereafter."* This love for the world and disregard for the Hereafter prevents them from accepting the truth.

Describing the conditions of the believers and the disbelievers on the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"Many faces on that day will be resplendent..."* i.e. rejoicing and free from worries. People who teach the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have received the supplication of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this regard. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"May Allāh keep the person resplendent who hears something from me and then passes it on as he heard it, for many a person who receives a message remembers it better than the one who actually heard it."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 35*]

Together with being happy, the believers will be *"beholding the sight of their Lord"*. This verse makes it clear that people will see Allāh in the Hereafter, something which is impossible in this world. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person occupying the lowest rank of Heaven will see his gardens, wives, bounties, servants and thrones within a distance of a thousand years. The most honoured of them will be those who will be able to look at their Lord morning and evening."* Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse: *"Many faces on that day will be resplendent, beholding the sight of their Lord."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 501 from Tirmidhi and Ahmad*]

On the contrary, *"many faces on that day will be gloomy, sensing that they will be dealt with most severely."* Because of the evil they committed in this world these people will rue the punishment awaiting them. Allāh continues, *"It will never be"* i.e. it will never be prudent to prefer the life of this world to that of the Hereafter. It is rather necessary for people to prepare for death and the life thereafter because this world is transient.

Describing death, Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, when the soul reaches the collar-bone and it is said (by those around the dying person) 'Who can cure him?'; and he is certain that this is really the parting; and when one leg is joined with the other"*. This happens to many a dying person. However, many commentators state that this verse refers to the pangs of death because the soul is extracted first from the feet. When all these signs are manifest *"then on this day you will be drawn towards your Lord."* At this stage, a person's relationship with this world and with the people of this world is severed and he leaves for the next life where Allāh will decide whether he deserves Heaven or Hell.

(31) So he neither verified nor performed Salāh... (32) .... but instead he denied and walked away. (33) Then he went to his family in arrogance. (34) Woe to you and woe to you again! (35) Woe to you yet again and again! (36) Does man think that he will be left to be? (37) Was he not a discharge of semen... (38) .after which he developed into a clot of blood and then Allāh created him and perfected him? (39) Then Allāh made the couple male and female? (40) Does He then not have the power to resurrect the dead?

MAN FORGETS HIS HUMBLE BEGINNING AND BEHAVES ARROGANTLY

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that Allāh refers specifically to Abu Jahl but also to all leaders of the disbelievers when He says, *"So he neither verified nor performed Salāh but instead he denied and walked away. Then he went to his family in arrogance."* The behaviour of a proud person clearly displays his pride. When the truth is presented to him, he turns away arrogantly and refuses to listen. His style of walking also exudes pride.

Addressing such a person, Allāh says, *"Woe to you and woe to you again! Woe to you yet again and again!"* This curse seals the damnation of the person, emphasising that he will never escape punishment which is extremely close at hand. The Arabic word *"owla"* (translated above as *"woe")* literally refers to something that is close at hand and cannot be averted. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه narrates that when these verses were revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم grabbed hold of Abu Jahl's clothes and recited to him, *"Woe to you and woe to you again! Woe to you yet again and again!"* Abu Jahl said, *"You are threatening me when I am the most honourable person walking between the mountains of Makkah."* Abu Jahl was later killed in disgrace during the Battle of Badr.

Allāh continues, *"Does man think that he will be left to be?"* People are foolish to think that they will not be punished for rejecting the Qur'ān and the articles of Belief. They think that they will be left to enjoy their lives as they please regardless of the evil they carry out. Allāh refutes this misconception, reminding man that he will soon be required to render an account for all his deeds.

Allāh asks, *"Was he (man) not a discharge of semen after which he developed into a clot of blood and then Allāh created him and perfected him? Then Allāh made the couple male and female? Does He then not have the power to resurrect the dead?"* Allāh reminds man that he was once a mere drop of semen but Allāh developed him into a perfectly-formed human being after passing through several stages. Man accepts that Allāh accomplished all of this with every human that was born, yet he refuses to believe that Allāh can resurrect man on the Day of Judgment even though people accept that doing something the second time is easier than the first time.

A HADITH: Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when one reaches the end of Surah Tīn (*Surah 95*), one

should recite:

Allāh is certainly the Wisest of the wise and I am witness to it."

Similarly, when one reaches the end of Surah Qiyāmah (Surah 75), one should say:

"Indeed Allāh has the power to resurrect the dead."

In a like manner, when reaching the end of Surah Mursalāt (*Surah 77*), one should recite:

"We believe in Allāh." [*"Mishkāt" p. 81 from Abu Dawūd*]

سورة الدهر

Madinan	Surah Ad-Dahar	Verses 31

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

هَلْ أَتَىٰ عَلَى الْإِنسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا ﴿١﴾ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٣﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Undoubtedly, a moment in time has passed by man when he was not even something worth mentioning. (2) Indeed We have created man from a mixed seed to test him and We made him (a) hearing and seeing (being). (3) We guided him to the path, so he is either grateful or ungrateful.

ALLĀH CREATED MAN AND GUIDED HIM. WHILE MANY ARE GRATEFUL, OTHERS ARE NOT

Surah Dahar is also called Surah Insān. The Surah begins with the creation of man and then classifies two types of people, the grateful and the ungrateful. Allāh then discusses the punishment that the ungrateful ones will suffer, followed by the bounties that the grateful ones will enjoy in the Hereafter. The concluding verses of the Surah enjoin the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم to be patient and instruct the performance of Tahajjud Ṣalāh (*A prayer said after midnight*).

Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, a moment in time has passed by man when he was not even something worth mentioning."* Whether a man is haughty and proud, he must bear in mind that he was once nothing at all. Allāh creates him from a drop of semen, that is also something that people would rather not mention. Allāh says, *"Indeed We have created man from a mixed seed"* i.e. from a mixture of the male and female gametes. Thereafter, he develops into a clot of blood, gradually becoming a lump of flesh and then a perfectly formed human being. Allāh then instils the soul into the child and allows it to be born. However, this child is not born without a purpose.

Allāh says that He created this human *"to test him"*, as Allāh says in Surah Mulk *"to test which of you carry out the best deeds."* Allāh also granted man various

faculties like intelligence and the five senses. However, man's guidance is not derived from these faculties, but Allāh sent Prophets عليهم السلام for this purpose. It is necessary for man to recognise his Creator by looking at His creation. Man is also required to follow the teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام. When he does this, he will be expressing gratitude to Allāh because whatever He granted man will then be used correctly. However, there are still many who are ungrateful viz, the disbelievers. Referring to these two groups, Allāh says, *"so he (man) is either grateful or ungrateful."*

إِنَّآ أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَـٰفِرِينَ سَلَـٰسِلَا۟ وَأَغْلَـٰلًا وَسَعِيرًا ﴿٤﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِن كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ﴿٥﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ ٱللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٦﴾ يُوفُونَ بِٱلنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُۥ مُسْتَطِيرًا ﴿٧﴾ وَيُطْعِمُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنكُمْ جَزَآءً وَلَا شُكُورًا ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِن رَّبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾ فَوَقَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّىٰهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا ﴿١١﴾ وَجَزَىٰهُم بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟ جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَـٰلُهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَذْلِيلًا ﴿١٤﴾ وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِـَٔانِيَةٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرَا۟ ﴿١٥﴾ قَوَارِيرَا۟ مِن فِضَّةٍ قَدَّرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا ﴿١٦﴾ وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنجَبِيلًا ﴿١٧﴾ عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّىٰ سَلْسَبِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾ ۞ وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَٰنٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنثُورًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢٠﴾ عَـٰلِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُندُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُّوٓا۟ أَسَاوِرَ مِن فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا ﴿٢١﴾ إِنَّ هَـٰذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَآءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُم مَّشْكُورًا ﴿٢٢﴾

(4) Verily for the disbelievers We have prepared chains, yokes and a flaming fire. (5) The good shall certainly drink from a cup which contains a (palatable) tonic of camphor. (6) Allāh's bondsmen shall drink from springs which they shall cause to gush forth abundantly. (7) They fulfil their vows and fear the day when difficulty shall be widespread. (8) Out of love for Allāh, they feed the poor, the orphan and the captive... (9) ... (saying,) "We feed you only for Allāh's pleasure and desire neither a return nor thanks from you." (10) "Verily we fear from our Lord a day that will be severe and extremely bitter." (11) So Allāh shall save them from the evil of that day and will give them resplendence and joy. (12) As a reward for their patience, they shall have gardens and silk (13) They will recline on couches there (in Heaven) and will feel neither heat nor cold. (14) Its shade will be close above them and its fruit will hang low. (15) Utensils of silver will be brought to them as well as glasses of crystal... (16) such crystal that

is like silver, which those serving will fill with an appropriate measure. (17) In Heaven they will drink from cups which contain a (wonderful) tonic of ginger. (18) They will drink from a spring in Heaven called Salsabīl (19) Lads of eternal youth will wait on them. When you see them, you will think that they are scattered pearls. (20) If you look there (in Heaven), you will see tremendous bounties and an enormous kingdom. (21) Their clothing will be fine green silk and thick silk. They will be adorned with bangles of silver and their Lord shall give them an extremely pure drink. (22) "This is your reward and appreciation for your-efforts."

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS AND THE FOOD, DRINK AND CLOTHING OF THE BELIEVERS

Referring to the punishment that Allāh has in store for the disbelievers in Hell, Allāh says, *"Verily for the disbelievers We have prepared chains, yokes and a flaming fire."* Many other verses of the Qur'ān have discussed these forms of punishment. Refer to the commentary of verse 8 of Surah Yāsīn (*Surah 36*) and verses 30 to 37 of Surah Hāqqah (*Surah 69*).

Allāh then describes the bounties that the pious and righteous believers will enjoy in Heaven. Allāh says, *"The good shall certainly drink from a cup which contains a (palatable) tonic of camphor."* A few verses later Allāh says, *"In Heaven they will drink from cups which contain a (wonderful) tonic of ginger. "*The camphor and ginger of Heaven cannot be compared to the camphor and ginger of this world because they will be so excellent that nothing of this world can compare to them. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه stated that everything that Allāh has mentioned about Heaven resembles the things of this world only in name. Otherwise, they cannot be compared to the things of this world.

"Allāh's bondsmen shall drink from springs which they shall cause to gush forth abundantly." Commentators mention that the cups of the people in Heaven will be filled with the water of these springs. The people of Heaven will have these springs at their command and will be able to direct the flow of the water wherever they please, in their gardens, their palaces or wherever else.

Allāh then describes who are these loyal servants who will receive these bounties. Allāh says that they are those who *'fulfil their vows"* i.e. whenever they vow to do something good, they ensure that they fulfil the vow. It is Wājib (*compulsory*) for a person to fulfil his vow, as Allāh commands in Surah Hajj : *"(They should) fulfil their vows"*. Although one will not be sinful for not taking a vow (to do something good), once it is taken it will be compulsory to fulfil. According to the Ahadīth, a person should not fulfil a vow to carry out a sin. If a person vows to commit a sin, he should not fulfil the vow but should rather pay the Kaffāra (*expiation*) for breaking an oath. [*"Mishkāt" p. 297*]

Allāh says further that these people *'fear the day when difficulty shall be widespread."* This refers to the Day of Judgment when the sun, moon and stars will be without light, the sky will split, mountains will fly about like wool and people will scurry in fright from their graves. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once noticed Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها weeping. When he asked her the reason for weeping, she replied that fear for Hell made her weep. She then asked the

Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether he would remember his family members on the Day of Judgment. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her that no person will remember another:

1. *When deeds will be weighed at the scales until a person knows whether his good deeds weighed heavily or lightly.*

2. *When the records of deeds will be distributed until a person knows whether his record is given in his right or left hand*

3. *When the bridge of Sirāt is placed over Hell. [Abu Dawūd v.2 p. 298]*

Describing yet another sterling quality of His pious bondsmen, Allāh says, *"Out of love for Allāh, they feed the poor, the orphan and the captive..."* i.e. they spend on the needy for the pleasure of Allāh. While some commentators state that the *"captive"* refers to a Muslim captive, others maintain that a person will also be rewarded for spending on a disbeliever captive, especially if he had been captured unjustly.

When spending on the needy, these pious slaves of Allāh say to the recipients, *"We feed you only for Allāh's pleasure and desire neither a return nor thanks from you."* Saying this, they put the needy person at ease by informing him that they do not want him to return the favour. In fact, they do not even expect the person to thank them. They help others only for Allāh's pleasure and for His reward. This verse teaches us that we should have absolutely no motives for spending on the needy. It should also not matter to us whether the person appreciates the good turn or not because we should desire only Allāh's pleasure.

Many people who spend on the needy (especially on family and friends) often remind the beneficiary about the favour and say to others, *"I did so much for him and he couldn't even say 'Thank you'!"* By saying this, they destroy many rewards they may have earned for the deed. Although the recipient should thank the donor, make supplication for him and tell others about his generosity, the donor should not expect this. The donor should anticipate only Allāh's pleasure.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said that Allāh will not speak to three persons on the Day of Judgment. In addition to this, Allāh will not even look at them with mercy, will not purify them and will punish them most severely. The narrator of the hadith Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه exclaimed, *"Woe to them. Who are they, O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that they are:

1. *The person whose trousers hang below his ankles.*

2. *The person who reminds others of the favours he did them.*

3. *The person who sells his goods by taking false oaths. [Muslim]*

Allāh quotes the statement of His pious bondsmen further. They say, *"Verily we fear from our Lord a day that will be severe and extremely bitter."* They are always

conscious of the fact that they will have to face reckoning on the Day of Judgment. The Arabic word *"abūs"* (translated above as *"severe")* refers to something that causes a person's face to be distorted out of fear and which presents itself in an unforgiving and ruthless manner. While the second adjective *"amateur"* (translated above as *"extremely bitter")* contains a similar meaning, it refers to something that is more effective in causing a person's face to distort. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that *"abūs"* refers to something that causes the mouth to be distorted while *"amateur"* refers to something that causes the forehead and eyebrows to contort.

Because they feared the severity of the Day of Judgment, *"Allāh shall save them from the evil of that day and will give them resplendence and joy."* Allāh shall illuminate their faces and fill their hearts with happiness. May Allāh make us among them. Āmīn.

Furthermore, *"As a reward for their patience, they shall have gardens and silk. They will recline on couches there (in Heaven) and will feel neither heat nor cold."* The climate of Heaven shall be perfect in every way and the people there will suffer no discomfort whatsoever. The word "patience" used in the verse refers to all three categories of 'abr" viz. (1) steadfastly fulfilling Allāh's commands, (2) restraining one's carnal self from committing sins and (3) exercising patience when afflicted by difficulties and hardships.

"Its shade will be close above them." There will not be any harsh sunlight in Heaven. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"We shall enter them into abundant shade."* Allāh then refers to the fruit of Heaven when He says that *"its fruit will hang low."* The fruit will be within easy reach of the people and they shall have any fruit they desire at any time.

"Utensils of silver will be brought to them as well as glasses of crystal; such crystal that is like silver, which those serving will fill with an appropriate measure." This means that the glasses of Heaven will be as bright as silver and as clear and sparkling as crystal. The servants pouring the drinks will pour so accurately that the drink will neither be too much nor too little for the person. It will always be exactly what he wants.

"In Heaven they will drink from cups which contain a (wonderful) tonic of ginger. They will drink from a spring in Heaven called Salsabīl." The author of 'Ruhul Ma'āni" states that the mixture will sometimes be ginger and sometimes camphor. There is therefore no discrepancy between this verse and verse 5 above.

Allāh then speaks of the servants in Heaven. Allāh says, *"Lads of eternal youth will wait on them. When you see them, you will think that they are scattered pearls."* They are described as such because their bright appearance will resemble pearls and they will be found everywhere. Allāh says in Surah Tūr, *"Their youngsters shall wait on them, appearing to be concealed pearls."* A verse of Surah Wāqi'ah states, *"Youngsters of eternal youth shall wait on them with goblets and jugs and glasses filled with flowing wine. Neither will they have headaches with it, nor will they be intoxicated"*

Allāh continues, *"If you look there (in Heaven), you will see tremendous bounties*

and an enormous kingdom." Allāh describes Heaven as a vast kingdom so that no one thinks that it will merely be a few gardens and houses of the type that people own in this world. In fact, the entire world that we know is minute compared to the Heaven of a single person. Allāh will say to the last person entering Heaven,

"Go and enter your Heaven which is the size of the world and ten times more." The narrator of the hadith states that this person will be the lowest ranking person in Heaven. [*"Mishkāt" p. 492 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person occupying the lowest rank of Heaven will see his gardens, wives, bounties, servants and thrones within a distance of a thousand years. The most honoured of them will be those who will be able to look at their Lord morning and evening. "Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse: *"Many faces on that day will be resplendent, beholding the sight of their Lord."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 501 from Tirmidhi and Ahmad*]

If this will be the Heaven of the lowest ranking person in Heaven, one cannot imagine what people belonging to the other ranks will enjoy.

"Their clothing will be fine green silk and thick silk. " Of course, the silk of Heaven is immensely superior to that of this world. The clothes of Heaven will be green because green is most comforting to the eye. However, there are no words in the verse to indicate that the clothes of Heaven will only be green. There is every possibility that the clothes will be available in every colour because *"In Heaven you shall have whatever your heart desires, and you shall have whatever you ask for."* [*Surah HāMīm Sajdah (41), verse 31*]

In addition to this, *"They will be adorned with bangles of silver"*. Surah Kahf and Surah Hajj state that the bangles will be made of gold. There is no discrepancy between the verses because they will wear bangles of both gold and silver. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that if a person of Heaven has to peep into this world and his bangle becomes visible, its brilliance will outshine the sun just as the sun outshines the stars. [*"Mishkāt" p. 498 from Tirmidhi*]

QUESTION: Bangles look nice on women and do not suit men. Why will the men of Heaven wear bangles?

ANSWER : The style and appeal of clothing and jewellery vary from nation to nation. Although men generally do not wear bangles, it would be made appealing to the people of Heaven and they will want to wear them. Taking watch straps as an example, one will notice that they are of various types and styles and even men wear gold and silver straps that look good on them. In certain parts of the world bangles are put on men when they marry and all their people look on in admiration. Because it is a custom, everyone accepts it and approves of it. In fact, they are so adamant to practise this custom that they even refuse to obey the prohibition of the Shari'ah in this regard.

The foregoing verses read: *"The good shall certainly drink from a cup which contains a (palatable) tonic of camphor"* and *"Utensils of silver will be brought to them*

as well as glasses of crystal." The people of Heaven will be honoured because waiters will serve these drinks to them. However, their honour is made even clearer in the verse where Allāh says, *"their Lord shall give them an extremely pure drink"* because here Allāh is making the drinks available to them directly without an intermediary. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that the drink is described as being "extremely pure" because it will not emerge from the body as impure urine. Rather, it will become perspiration that will be better than musk. The people of Heaven will first eat and then drink this pure drink which will cause the food to digest and become perspiration that is better than the purest musk. The stomach will thus become empty and will be able to take more food.

Allāh will announce to the people of Heaven, *"This is your reward and appreciation for your efforts."*

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ تَنزِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾ فَٱصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ ءَاثِمًا أَوْ
كَفُورًا ﴿٢٤﴾ وَٱذْكُرِ ٱسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلَّيْلِ فَٱسْجُدْ لَهُۥ وَسَبِّحْهُ
لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ يُحِبُّونَ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذَرُونَ وَرَآءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾
نَّحْنُ خَلَقْنَٰهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَآ أَسْرَهُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَآ أَمْثَٰلَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦ
تَذْكِرَةٌ ۖ فَمَن شَآءَ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَمَا تَشَآءُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٣٠﴾ يُدْخِلُ مَن يَشَآءُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ وَٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا
أَلِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

(23) Verily We have revealed the Qur'ān to you bit by bit. (24) So remain steadfast on the command of your Lord and do not follow any sinner or disbeliever from them. (25) Remember the name of your Lord morning and evening. (26) Prostrate to Him during the night and glorify Him for a long time at night (27) Indeed these people love the world and leave behind them a weighty day. (28) Only We have created them and only We strengthened their joints. Whenever We wish, We could replace them with people just like them. (29) This is certainly an advice. So whoever wills should adopt a path towards his Lord. (30) You cannot will anything without Allāh 's will. Verily Allāh is All Knowing, the Wise. (31) He enters whoever He wills into His mercy and has prepared a painful punishment for the oppressors.

ALLĀH COMMANDS THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم TO ENGAGE IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALLĀH *(DHIKR)* ALL THE TIME AND TO ENGAGE IN WORSHIP DURING THE NIGHT

After mentioning the bounties of Heaven, Allāh mentions a tremendous bounty that He has conferred on man in this world and which will allow man to attain the lofty bounties of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. This bounty is the Qur'ān. Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Verily We have revealed the*

Qur'ān to you bit by bit. "Instead of revealing the entire Qur'ān at once, Allāh revealed it bit by bit for several reasons. Among these was that it made it easier for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and for the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم to absorb. Because the teaching of the Qur'ān resulted in persecution from the disbelievers, Allāh enjoins, *"So remain steadfast on the command of your Lord and do not follow any sinner or disbeliever from them (because they intend to stop your preaching)."*

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, *"Remember the name of your Lord morning and evening Prostrate to Him during the night and glorify Him for a long time at night."* These verses make it clear that together with propagating the Religion, the preacher should not neglect his personal Ibādah because this will give him strength and allow his mission to prosper.

Allāh Ta'āla then gives the reason for the aversion of the disbelievers. Allāh says that they refuse to accept the truth because *"Indeed these people love the world."* They think that if they accept Islām, they will have to forsake all their worldly possessions. Little do they realise that even if they do have to suffer a loss in this world, they will suffer even more in the Hereafter if they do not accept Islām. Unlike the temporary losses of this world, the suffering of the Hereafter will be eternal.

Making further reference to the disbelievers, Allāh says that they *"leave behind them a weighty day."* This world and the Ākhirah are like co-wives of a person. Loving the one will jeopardise one's love for the other. A strange feature to note is that even people who have no wealth, no status, no honour and nothing else of this world also cling on to disbelief. The fact is that Allāh guides whoever He wills on to the straight path.

Refuting the surprise that the disbelievers display about Judgment Day and resurrection, Allāh says, *"Only We have created them and only We strengthened their joints. Whenever We wish, We could replace them with people just like them."* This verse tells man that he has no reason to be surprised because Allāh can easily resurrect him just as Allāh created him the first time and strengthened him. In saying "We strengthened their joints" Allāh Ta'āla alludes to the fact that even though man's limbs and organs are perpetually in motion and the wear and tear" on them is phenomenal, they continue to function from birth until death. When machines made of iron and steel wear out and require regular servicing to remain functioning for even a short period, man's body which is made of soft muscle and tissue functions for tens of years without maintenance. It is certainly only Allāh Who makes this possible.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"It is compulsory for you to pay Sadaqah for every joint of your body each day."* Saying *"Subhā Nallāh"* is Sadaqah (*charity*), saying *"Al Hamdu Lillāh"* is Sadaqah, saying *"Allāhu Akbar"* is Sadaqah, saying *"Lā Ilāha Illallāhu"* is Sadaqah, enjoining good is Sadaqah and forbidding evil is Sadaqah. Performing two Rakāhs of Salāh during midmorning (called Salātut Duhā or Chasht Salāh) suffices as Sadaqah for all these joints." [*"Mishkāt" p. 116 from Muslim*]

According to another hadith, every person is created with 360 joints. If his good deeds for the day equal this number each day, he will have secured

salvation from Hell each day. Good deeds include saying *"Allāhu Akbar"*, saying *"Al Hamdu Lillāh "*, saying *"Lā Ilāha Illallāhu"*, saying *"Subhā Nallāh"*, seeking Allāh's forgiveness, removing a stone, thorn, bone, etc from the road and enjoining good and forbidding evil. [*"Mishkāt" p. 168 from Muslim*]

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"This is certainly an advice. So whoever wills should adopt a path towards his Lord. You cannot will anything without Allāh's will. Verily Allāh is All Knowing, the Wise. He enters whoever He wills into His mercy and has prepared a painful punishment for the oppressors."*

سورة المرسلت

Makkan	Surah Al-Mursalāt	Verses 50

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

وَٱلْمُرْسَلَٰتِ عُرْفًا (1) فَٱلْعَٰصِفَٰتِ عَصْفًا (2) وَٱلنَّٰشِرَٰتِ نَشْرًا (3) فَٱلْفَٰرِقَٰتِ فَرْقًا (4) فَٱلْمُلْقِيَٰتِ ذِكْرًا (5) عُذْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا (6) إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَٰقِعٌ (7) فَإِذَا ٱلنُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ (8) وَإِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ فُرِجَتْ (9) وَإِذَا ٱلْجِبَالُ نُسِفَتْ (10) وَإِذَا ٱلرُّسُلُ أُقِّتَتْ (11) لِأَىِّ يَوْمٍ أُجِّلَتْ (12) لِيَوْمِ ٱلْفَصْلِ (13) وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلْفَصْلِ (14) وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ (15)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the oath of those winds that are sent to give benefit. (2) By the oath of those winds that blow extremely severely. (3) By the oath of those winds that disperse the clouds. (4) By the oath of those winds that separate the clouds. (5) By the oath of those winds that induce the remembrance of Allāh... (6) .....be it by way of repentance or warning. (7) Verily what you have been warned about shall certainly take place. (8) So when the light of the stars will be obliterated... (9)...... when the sky will be split... (10) ...... when mountains will fly about... (11) .... .and when the messengers will be gathered for an appointed time. (12) For which day shall their matter be postponed? (13) For the Day of Judgment. (14) What will tell you what the Day of Judgment is? (15) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!

JUDGEMENT IS POSTPONED UNTIL THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

In these opening verses of Surah Mursalāt, Allāh Ta'āla swears oaths by various types of winds to assert that *"Verily what you have been warned about (i.e. Judgment Day) shall certainly take place."* Allāh Ta'āla makes it clear to people that their refusal to believe in the Day of Judgment will neither cause it to be postponed nor cancelled. Allāh mentions beneficial and destructive winds. Those winds that bring rain clouds are beneficial while those that blow fiercely are usually destructive. These types of clouds induce man to think of Allāh because the beneficial winds are a sign of His mercy and prompt man to be grateful to Allāh. On the other hand, destructive winds instil fear in man's heart and

prompt him to repent to Allāh so that he may be saved from punishment. Man needs to realise that this gratitude and repentance will be of benefit to him on the Day of Judgment. However, should he neglect these obligations, he will be answerable on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh then describes the Day of Judgment. Allāh says that it will be on the Day of Judgment *"when the light of the stars will be obliterated, when the sky will be split, when mountains will fly about, and when the messengers will be gathered for an appointed time."*

Allāh then asks, *"For which day shall their matter be postponed?"* Allāh Himself answers the question by saying, *"For the Day of Judgement."* In these verses, Allāh tells the disbelievers that they should not think that because they have not yet been punished in this world, they will never be punished. They should bear in mind that their punishment has been deferred to another time viz, the Hereafter. Concerning those who deny Allāh, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the other Prophet عليه السلام or Judgment Day, Allāh says, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

(16) Have We not destroyed the former nations... (17) ... and then joined the later generations with them? (18) Thus do We treat the sinners. (19) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (20) Have We not created you from despised water... (21) .... placed it in a safe place... (22) ....for a specified period... (23) ... and determined (it precisely)? We are certainly the best of those who determine. (24) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (25) Have We not made the earth consist of... (26) .... both the living and the dead? (27) Have We not placed towering mountains on earth and given you palatable water to drink? (28) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!

LEARNING FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF FORMER NATIONS AND GRATITUDE FOR ALLĀH'S BOUNTIES

When the disbelievers were warned about Allāh's punishment, they denied it, saying that they cannot believe in something that has not come. Explaining to them that His punishment is a reality that has already struck many nations before them, Allāh says, *"Have We not destroyed the former nations and then joined the later generations with them?"* i.e. We punished the later generations as well because they followed the same route of disbelief that their forebears followed. *"Thus do We treat the sinners."* The punishment of the disbelievers is a

preordained affair. They will certainly be punished, if not in this world, then certainly in the Hereafter. However, there have been many whom Allāh has punished in both worlds. Those who deny the tenets of belief are cursed when Allāh says, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

Refuting the scepticism of those who deny Judgment Day, Allāh says, *"Have We not created you from despised water (semen), placed it in a safe place (the womb) for a specified period (the gestation period) and determined (this period precisely)? We are certainly the best of those who determine."* It is according to this specific period that children are born. Allāh reiterates, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

Allāh continues, *"Have We not made the earth consist of both the living and the dead?"* Just as there are living beings on earth, there are also corpses and carcasses beneath its surface. When Judgment Day arrives, all those who are alive will also die. Allāh will then resurrect the dead like a new creation from the earth.

Allāh asks further, *"Have We not placed towering mountains on earth..."* to lend stability to the earth? However, even these massive creations will be uprooted on the Day of Judgment and will float about like cotton wool, a demonstration that irrespective of its apparent might, nothing can withstand Allāh's supremacy.

Recounting another favour to mankind, Allāh asks, *"(Have We not) given you palatable water to drink?"* Man cannot thank Allāh enough for providing drinking water for him and for the multitude of other favours. It is therefore necessary that man accepts and practises Allāh's commands and everything that the Prophets عليهم السلام have taught. The lot of those who deny this shall be miserable indeed because Allāh says, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

انطَلِقُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَا كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ (29) انطَلِقُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ ظِلٍّ ذِى ثَلَـٰثِ شُعَبٍ (30) لَّا ظَلِيلٍ وَلَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱللَّهَبِ (31) إِنَّهَا تَرْمِى بِشَرَرٍ كَٱلْقَصْرِ (32) كَأَنَّهُۥ جِمَـٰلَتٌ صُفْرٌ (33) وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ (34) هَـٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنطِقُونَ (35) وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ (36) وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ (37) هَـٰذَا يَوْمُ ٱلْفَصْلِ ۖ جَمَعْنَـٰكُمْ وَٱلْأَوَّلِينَ (38) فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُونِ (39) وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ (40)

(29) "Proceed towards that which you used to deny!" (30) "Proceed towards the canopy of three parts..." (31) "....which will neither provide shade nor offer shelter against the heat." (32) Indeed, it (Hell) throws sparks like huge palaces... (33) ...resembling pitch black camels. (34) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (35) This is that day when they will be unable to speak... (36) . . .and they will not be permitted to offer any excuses. (37) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (38) "This is that Day of Judgement. We have gathered you together with the former nations." (39) "So if you have any plot, use it against Me!" (40) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!

THE ADDRESS TO THE DISBELIEVERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

When the disbelievers are gathered on the Day of Judgment, they will be told, *"Proceed towards that which you used to deny!"* With these words, they will be commanded to enter Hell which they regarded as a myth in this world. A great mass of smoke of three parts will then emerge from Hell, resembling a large canopy. Though resembling a canopy, it will not serve the purpose of a canopy because it *"will neither provide shade nor offer shelter against the heat.* Commentators state that the disbelievers will have to wait in this smoke after their reckoning while the believers will rest in the shade of Allāh's throne.

Describing Hell further, Allāh says, *"Indeed, it (Hell) throws sparks like huge palaces resembling pitch black camels.* "Commentators mention that the larger sparks of Hell will be as large as huge palaces while the smaller sparks will resemble black camels. When the sparks of Hell are so enormous, one cannot imagine the vastness of Hell itself. Allāh reiterates, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

Allāh continues, *"This is that day when they will be unable to speak and they will not be permitted to offer any excuses.* " This will be during the initial stages of the Day of Judgment. However, people will be permitted to speak later on, but their excuses will not benefit them at all. Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"The day when the excuses of the oppressors will not benefit them, when they will be cursed and will have the worst of abodes."* [*Surah 40, verse 52*]

"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!" On the Day of Judgment, the disbelievers will be told, *"This is that Day of Judgement. We have gathered you together with the former nations. So if you have any plot, use it against Me!"* None will be able to escape Allāh's punishment on the Day of Judgment and there will be nothing to help them. Allāh repeats the curse when He says, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى ظِلَٰلٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤١﴾ وَفَوَٰكِهَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ كُلُوا۟
وَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُم مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱرْكَعُوا۟ لَا
يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَبِأَىِّ حَدِيثٍۭ بَعْدَهُۥ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(41) Verily those with Piety shall be (enjoying themselves) in shade, springs... (42) . . .and the fruit of their choice. (43) "Eat and drink with all blessings as reward for the deeds you carried out." (44) Thus do We reward those who do good. (45) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (46) "Eat and enjoy yourselves for a few days. You are certainly sinners." (47) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (48) When they are told to bow, they do not bow. (49) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day! (50) So what will they believe in after the Qur'ān?

THE REWARDS OF THOSE WITH PIETY

After discussing the plight of the disbelievers on the Day of Judgment, Allāh mentions the bliss that His pious servants will enjoy. Allāh says, *"Verily those with Piety shall be (enjoying themselves) in shade, springs -.* It is with reference to this shade that Allāh says in Surah Dahar, *"Its shade will be close above them."* Surah Dahar also mentions some of the springs of Heaven. In addition to this, they will also enjoy *"the fruit of their choice."* They will be told, *"Eat and drink with all blessings as a rewards for the deeds you carried out. Thus do We reward those who do good."* Eating and drinking with blessings means that the food and drink of Heaven will be good for the body as well as pleasing to the heart. A person will not dislike anything in Heaven because everything there is appealing. Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"in Heaven there shall be whatever the heart desires and whatever pleases the eye."* [*Surah 43, verse 70*]

Allāh then addresses the disbelievers saying, *"Eat and enjoy yourselves for a few days (in this world). You are certainly sinners"* i.e. you are certainly disbelievers because you are guilty of the worst sin viz. disbelief. If they do not believe before their deaths, they face eternal damnation. *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day!"*

"When they are told (in this world) to bow, they do not bow. "These people refuse to submit to Allāh and do not perform Ṣalāh when they are enjoined to do so.

"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day? So what will they believe in after the Qur'ān?" The Qur'ān explains Oneness of Allah and Belief to people most excellently and no book can ever match its eloquence. However, the disbelievers still refuse to submit. It is therefore obvious that nothing else can expect to guide them.

Para Thirty

سورة النبا

Makkan	Surah Naba	Verses 40

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿١﴾ عَنِ النَّبَإِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٣﴾ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤﴾ ثُمَّ
كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾ أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَادًا ﴿٦﴾ وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ﴿٧﴾ وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا
﴿٨﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ﴿٩﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ﴿١٠﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ﴿١١﴾
وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً
ثَجَّاجًا ﴿١٤﴾ لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا ﴿١٥﴾ وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا ﴿١٦﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) What do they ask about? (2) About the great news... (3) ...concerning which they differ? (4) Take heed! They will soon come to know. (5) Take heed again! They will soon come to know. (6) Have We not made the earth a bedding... (7) the mountains pegs... (8) .... and created you in pairs? (9) (And have We not) made your sleep a means of rest... (10) ...the night a drape... (11) ... and the day a means of earning livelihood? (12) (And have We not) made seven powerful skies above you... (13) ..and made a bright lantern. (14) And We sent torrential rains from laden clouds... (15) ...to extract with it seeds, plants... (16) .and dense gardens.

THE GREAT NEWS IS JUDGEMENT DAY (QIYĀMAH)

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه narrates that some members of the Quraysh were once having a discussion. When it was mentioned that the Qur'ān spoke about Judgment Day, some of them accepted while others did not. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* adds that some of them asked, "What *has Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *brought?"* It was with reference to this discussion that Allāh revealed the verse *"What do they ask about?" Allāh Himself replies to the question when He says, "About the great news (Judgment Day) concerning which they differ?* "While some of them believed in Judgment Day, others did not.

Allāh says, *"Take heed! They will soon come to know."* Allāh then repeats, *"Take heed again! They will soon come to know."* They will realise the error of their ways when Judgment Day does take place, but then it will be too late.

Allāh then mentions some of His creations that are there for all to see. By pondering over these, man will realise Allāh's great power and will understand that the Being Who created such phenomenal things must certainly have the power to resurrect people on the Day of Judgment. Allāh asks, *"Have We not made the earth a bedding, the mountains pegs, and created you in pairs?"* Because the mountains prevent the earth from shaking, man is able to stand, walk and travel easily on earth. Allāh has also created a spouse for man so that man may marry, may have a loving companion through the difficulties of life and may have contentment. In addition to this, marriage allows for procreation so that man may survive on earth.

Allāh continues, *"(And have We not) made your sleep a means of rest..."* Man gets physically and mentally tired during his daily activities and needs sleep to recuperate and replenish his energy. After a good night's rest, man again has the energy to continue his daily activities. The Arabic word *'subātā"* (translated above as *'a means of rest")* literally refers to cuffing something. This word aptly describes sleep because the voluntary movements of a person's limbs terminate while he sleeps and his fatigue is alleviated.

Allāh says that He made *"the night a drape and the day a means of earning livelihood?"* Man has the night to rest at home and the light of the day in which to earn a living. Therefore the night and the day are great bounties from Allāh. One can well imagine the difficulty if night had to be perpetual or if day had to be perpetual.

Allāh continues, *"(And have We not) made seven powerful skies above you and made a bright lantern"* i.e. the sun. Generating its own light, the sun provides the earth with innumerable benefits apart from light. It provides heat and allows plants and vegetation to grow. Besides these, research has disclosed numerous other benefits of the sun that were previously unknown.

"And We sent torrential rains from laden clouds to extract with it seeds, plants and dense gardens." Allāh uses the rain as a means of growing plants, many of which form man's staple diet. Among the many things that rain also grows is fodder for animals, which in turn provide man with food, milk, hide, transport and labour. The Arabic word *'alfafa"* (translated above as *"dense")* refers to trees the branches of which twine into each other as they grow.

إِنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَـٰتًا ﴿١٧﴾ يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَفُتِحَتِ
ٱلسَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَٰبًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَسُيِّرَتِ ٱلْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا ﴿٢٠﴾

(17) Verily the Day of Judgement has been fixed. (18) The day when the trumpet will be blown and you will come in armies. (19) The sky will be opened and will become many doors. (20) The mountains will be made to fly and will be reduced to dust.

In the above verses, Allāh Ta'āla recounts some manifestations of His immense power. By pondering about these, man will realise that Allāh is certainly Capable of resurrecting the dead on the Day of Judgment. Allāh makes it clear that the Day of Judgment will neither be preponed nor postponed even though there may be people who deny its advent and are sceptical about it. Allāh says, *"Verily the Day of Judgement has been fixed. The day when the trumpet will be blown and you will come in armies."* Every generation from the time of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام will present themselves for reckoning and they will arrive from their graves in large numbers.

Allāh describes the scene of the day further when He says, *"The sky will be opened and will become many doors. The mountains will be made to fly and will be reduced to dust."* Allāh says in Surah Naml, *"You will look at the mountains, thinking them to be solid but they will be passing by like clouds."* A verse of Surah Muzzammil reads: *"the day that the earth and mountains will shake and the mountains will be reduced to a heap of dust."* Describing the same scene on the Day of Judgment, Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"When the earth shall convulse with violent earthquakes. And the mountains will be shattered to pieces and become like scattered dust."*

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا ﴿21﴾ لِّلطَّٰغِينَ مَـَٔابًا ﴿22﴾ لَّٰبِثِينَ فِيهَآ أَحْقَابًا ﴿23﴾ لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا ﴿24﴾ إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَّاقًا ﴿25﴾ جَزَآءً وِفَاقًا ﴿26﴾ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا ﴿27﴾ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا كِذَّابًا ﴿28﴾ وَكُلَّ شَىْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَٰهُ كِتَٰبًا ﴿29﴾ فَذُوقُوا۟ فَلَن نَّزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا ﴿30﴾

(21) Indeed Hell is a place of ambush... (22) ....an abode for the rebellious. (23) They will remain there for an extremely long period of time. (24) In Hell they will taste neither any coolness nor any drink... (25) .... except boiling water and Ghassāq... (26) ..... as a befitting punishment (for their sins). (27) Indeed they never looked forward to reckoning... (28) .... and adamantly falsified Our verses. (29) .... We have meticulously recorded everything in the book. (30) "So taste! We shall increase you only in punishment."

When Judgment Day takes place at its appointed time, the righteous and the sinful will see what is in store for them. The bounties that the pious will enjoy in the Hereafter will be discussed in the commentary of verse 31 and the verses thereafter. Allāh begins by speaking about the plight of the disbelievers and polytheists in the above verses when He says, *"Indeed Hell is a place of ambush"*. The angels appointed to punish people in Hell are lying in wait for them. No sooner will they arrive than the angels will start punishing them. Other commentators state that verse should be translated as *"Indeed Hell is waiting in ambush."* Lending the description to Hell itself is not farfetched because Allāh has given life to Hell. Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"When it (Hell) will see them from a distance, they will hear the roar of its fury and its crackling."* [Surah 25, verse 12]

Allāh says further that Hell is *"an abode for the rebellious. They will remain*

there for an extremely long period of time." The most rebellious are the disbelievers and Polytheists. The Arabic word "ahqāb" (translated above as "an extremely long period of time') is the plural of "hiqb". According to Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه, the word refers to an infinite period of time. According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه, a single "hiqb" is equivalent to eighty years. It has also been reported that a single day of these eighty years is equal to a thousand years of this world. Whatever the interpretation, the Qur'ān is explicit that people will spend many periods of "hiqb" in Hell.

Because the period of a *"hiqb"* has not been specified, and because Surah Nisā and Surah Jinn mention the word "abada" (until eternity) when mentioning the punishment of the disbelievers and polytheists, it is the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamā'ah that the disbelievers and Polytheists will suffer eternally in Hell just as the believers will enjoy Heaven eternally. Just as the bounties of the people of Heaven will never come to an end, the punishment of the people in Hell will also not come to an end. It is for this reason that commentators state that the interpretation of *"ahqāb"* is *"hiqb"* after *"hiqb"* i.e. the people of Hell will suffer *"hiqb"* after *"hiqb"* of punishment until eternity.

Allāh continues, *"In Hell they will taste neither any coolness nor any drink.."* The people of Hell will have no respite from punishment. Neither will they have relief from the heat nor from thirst. Of course, this verse does not contradict the existence of *Zamharīr,* an icy cold part of Hell in which many will be placed for punishment. The *"coolness"* mentioned in this verse refers to a welcome relief from the heat of Hell and not an icy cold punishment.

Allāh then adds that the only drink that the people of Hell will receive will be *"boiling water and Ghassāq"*. Allāh says in Surah Muhammad that the people of Hell will be *"given boiling water to drink, which tears their innards to shreds?"* [*Surah 47, verse 15*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that if a single bucket of *"Ghassāq"* were to be thrown on earth, every person on earth will rot. ["Mishkāt" p. 503]

The book *"Mirqāt"* (which is a commentary of *"Mishkāt')* has cited the following four interpretations of *"Ghassāq"*:

1. *It is the puss of the people of Hell, and the fluid that remains after their wounds are washed.*
2. *It is the tears of the people in Hell..*
3. *It refers to Zamharīr, which is the icy cold part of Hell.*
4. *It is the frozen, decaying puss of the people in Hell, which is too cold to drink (However, people will be forced to drink it because of extreme thirst).*

Whatever the interpretation, *"Ghassāq"* is something extremely horrid and foul smelling. May Allāh save us all from it. Āmīn.

Allāh then says that whatever the people of Hell will suffer shall be *"a befitting punishment (for their sins)."* Because disbelief and polytheism are the worst of sins, the disbelievers and Polytheists deserve the worst of punishment. They will suffer punishment until eternity because they lived their entire lives as disbelievers and Polytheists. Allāh then says about these people, *'indeed they never looked forward to reckoning and adamantly falsified Our verses. We have meticulously recorded everything in the book"* They will be told, *"So taste (the punishment)! We shall increase you only in punishment."*

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ﴿٣١﴾ حَدَآئِقَ وَأَعْنَٰبًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٣﴾ وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا ﴿٣٤﴾ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذَّٰبًا ﴿٣٥﴾ جَزَآءً مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَآءً حِسَابًا ﴿٣٦﴾ رَّبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلرُّوحُ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ﴿٣٨﴾ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْيَوْمُ ٱلْحَقُّ فَمَن شَآءَ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ مَـَٔابًا ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّآ أَنذَرْنَٰكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنظُرُ ٱلْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ ٱلْكَافِرُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى كُنتُ تُرَٰبًا ﴿٤٠﴾

(31) Those with Taqwa (Piety) shall certainly have success... (32) ... gardens, grapes... (33) ...youthful maidens of equal age... (34) ....and brimming glasses. (35) In Jannah (Heaven) they shall hear neither futile talk nor lies. (36) (All this will be) compensation, conferred as an ample gift from your Lord... (37) ... Who is the Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between them and the Most Compassionate. They will be unable to address Him. (38) On the day when every living being and the angels will stand in rows, none of them will be able to speak except the one whom Ar Rahmān permits and who speaks correctly. (39) That is the Day of Truth. So whoever wills should adopt a recourse towards his Lord. (40) We have certainly warned you of a near punishment; the day when a man will see what his hands sent ahead and the disbeliever will say, "Oh! If only I had been dust!"

After speaking about the terrible plight that the disbelievers will suffer in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, Allāh discusses the good fortune of those who possess piety. There are various levels of Piety. The highest level is abstaining from polytheism. Thereafter, there are numerous other levels depending on a person's abstinence from sin. According to these levels, people will enjoy varied levels in Heaven. Allāh says, *"Those with piety shall certainly have success..."* Although the word *"mafāza"* is translated as *"success"*, it also refers to a place of success viz. Heaven.

Allāh then recounts the bounties of Heaven which are a manifestation of a person's success. These bounties include *"gardens"*. The Arabic word used here for gardens is *"hadā'iq"*, which is the plural of *"hadīqa"*. *"Hadīqa"* actually refers to a garden or orchard that is surrounded by four walls. Although grapes are to be found in such orchards like all other fruit, Allāh mentions grapes separately

because grapes are a more celebrated fruit than other fruit.

Also among the bounties of Heaven will be *'youthful maidens of equal age"*. Husbands and wives in Heaven will be of the same age so that compatibility will be optimal. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that every person to enter Heaven will be thirty years of age irrespective of their age in this world when they passed away. Thereafter, they will not age.

"Shamā'il Tirmidhi" reports that an old lady once asked, *"O The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*. Pray that Allāh enters me into Heaven."* The Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم said to her, *"Old women will not enter Heaven."* Hearing this the old woman left weeping. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent someone after her with the message that she will not be old when she enters Heaven. She will be transformed into a young lady because Allāh states, *'indeed We have created these damsels very specially. And We have made them all virgins, most beloved and of equal age for the people of the right."*

Allāh states further that in Heaven people will enjoy *"brimming glasses "*. This verse does not contradict verse 16 of Surah Dahar (*Surah 76*) where Allāh says that *"those filling (the glasses) will fill by an appropriate measure."* There is no contradiction because those people who desire to have their glasses brimming over will have their desire.

*"In Heaven they shall hear neither futile talk nor lies. "*Not only will the people of Heaven not speak lies and hold useless discussions, they will not even hear this from others. Allāh continues, *"(All this will be) compensation (for their good deeds), conferred as an ample gjft from your Lord "*. Whatever the people of Heaven receive will be much more than everything they desire. There will be nothing left to be desired.

Whatever the people of Heaven receive will be from Allāh, *"Who is the Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between them and the Most Compassionate. They will be unable to address Him."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" interprets the verse to mean that the people of Hell will be unable to request respite and the people of Heaven will be unable to ask for more without His permission.

"On the day when every living being and the angels will stand in rows, none of them will be able to speak except the one whom Ar Rahmān permits and who speaks correctly. " Whoever wants to speak will not be able to speak. Only those whom Allāh knows will speak correctly will be granted permission to speak. Such people include those who will intercede on behalf of others. Referring to the angels, Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"He knows what is before them and what is behind them and only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede. They tremble with fear for Him."* [*Surah 21, verse 28*]

"That is the Day of Truth. So whoever wills should adopt a recourse towards his Lord" i.e. one should accept Islām and continue to perform good deeds until one's death. *"We have certainly warned you of a near punishment"* The punishment of the Day of Judgment is near because whatever is certain is regarded as being near.

Allāh continues, *"The day when a man will see what (deeds) his hands sent ahead*

(in his record of deeds)." Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"The record of deeds shall be placed and you will see the sinners afraid of what is contained in them. They will say, 'Woe be to us! What is with this book that it does not leave anything small or large unrecorded?' They will find their deeds present and your Lord shall not oppress anyone."* [*Surah 18, verse 50*]

Allāh says in Surah Zilzāl, *"Whoever does an atom 's weight of good will see it and whoever does and atom 's weight of evil will see it."* [*Surah 99, verses 7,8*]

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying that on the Day of Judgment, *"the disbeliever will say, 'Oh! If only I had been dust! "'*, *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه that every creature will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment, even the birds and animals. Then retribution will be taken from every one of them who oppressed another in any way. Consequently, a hornless goat will have revenge from the horned goat that butted it in the world. When revenge is exacted from all the animals, Allāh will command them, *"Become dust!"* Seeing this, the disbeliever will think that it would have been better for him if he were an animal so that his affair would be terminated after revenge is taken. He would then not have to suffer any further punishment. Although animals will have no reward, they will also have no punishment like the disbelievers. It is on this occasion that *"the disbeliever will say, 'Oh! If only I had been dust!*

Other commentators have stated that the disbeliever will express this wish when he sees the punishment in store for him. He will then wish that he were never born.

سورة النّٰزعٰت

Makkan	Surah An-Nāzi'āt	Verses 46

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالنَّٰزِعَٰتِ غَرْقًا ﴿١﴾ وَالنَّٰشِطَٰتِ نَشْطًا ﴿٢﴾ وَالسَّٰبِحَٰتِ سَبْحًا ﴿٣﴾ فَالسَّٰبِقَٰتِ سَبْقًا ﴿٤﴾ فَالْمُدَبِّرَٰتِ أَمْرًا ﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ﴿٦﴾ تَتْبَعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ﴿٧﴾ قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ ﴿٨﴾ أَبْصَٰرُهَا خَٰشِعَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ يَقُولُونَ أَءِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ ﴿١٠﴾ أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمًا نَّخِرَةً ﴿١١﴾ قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذًا كَرَّةٌ خَاسِرَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾ فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَٰحِدَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾ فَإِذَا هُم بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ﴿١٤﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the oath of those angels who harshly extract souls... (2) .... those who untie knots... (3) .... those who swim along... (4) ... who then swiftly race... (5) ... and those who arrange the commands (of Allāh). (6) The day (shall certainly take place) when that which shakes shall shake... (7) . . .to be followed by that which will follow. (8) On that day, many hearts will be fluttering... (9) ... with their gazes cast down. (10) They say, "Will we be returned to our former states..." (11) "...even after we have become decomposed bones?" (12) They say, "In that case the return shall be a tremendous loss." (13) It will be only a single blast... (14) .. . and they will all immediately be present for Reckoning.

These verses speak about the advent of Judgment Day. Allāh begins by taking oaths of several types of angels to assert that *"The day (shall certainly take place) when that which shakes shall shake."*

Allāh says, *"By the oath of those angels who harshly extract souls"*. The emphasis in this verse denotes that these angels mercilessly wrench the soul from every portion of the dying person's body, causing excruciating pain. Allāh then swears by those angels *"who untie knots"*. This refers to those angels who remove souls very gently from the body. Commentators state that the first group of angels extract the souls of the disbelievers while the second group extract the souls of the believers. Of course, there are times when Allāh causes the death of a believer to be difficult so that he may earn an exalted status in the Hereafter.

The Ahadīth mention that the soul of a believer emerges from the body as easily as water emerges from a water-bag. On the other hand, when a disbeliever has to leave this world for the Hereafter, dark-faced angels descend from the heavens. They carry with them sack cloth and appear before him as far as the eyes can see. Then the angel of death himself comes, sits by the head and says, *"O foul soul! Emerge towards Allāh's anger!"* The soul then disperses throughout the body in an attempt to escape. Thereafter the angel of death forcefully extracts the soul, just as wet wool wrapped around a skewer is forcefully removed. When the angel of death removes the soul, the other angels, without losing a split second, grab hold off the soul and wrap it in the sack cloth. [*"Mishkāt" p. 142*]

Allāh Ta'āla then takes an oath by those angels *"who swim along"*. Commentators state that this refers to the fluid and swift movement of the angels as they transport the soul of the believer to the heavens. Thereafter, Allāh swears by the angels *"who then swiftly race"* off with the souls of people once Allāh instructs them where to take the souls. Once the decision is made and the instruction issued, the angels hasten to *"arrange the (fulfilment of the) commands (of Allāh)."*

The above oaths are taken to assert that *"The day (shall certainly take place) when that which shakes shall shake"* This verse refers to the Day of Judgment and *"that which shakes"* refers to the first blowing of the trumpet, which will violently shake everything. The first blowing of the trumpet will *"be followed by that which will follow"* i.e. by the second blowing of the trumpet.

Describing the condition of people on the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"On that day, many hearts will be fluttering with their gazes cast down."* Allāh then quotes what the disbelievers used to say about Judgment day. They say, *"Will we be returned to our former states even after we have become decomposed bones?"* The disbelievers regard the advent of Judgment day as something farfetched and cynically ask this question. They also say *"In that case the return shall be a tremendous loss."* The disbelievers said that if Judgment day were to take place as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, they would be ruined because they will then suffer the punishment for their rejection. However, this statement was also intended to mock the belief of Judgment day because the disbelievers did not even have a vague belief that Judgment day could be a reality. If they did have the concern that they may have to suffer a loss, they would not have behaved as badly as they did.

Even if a dishonest person warns people not to go to a certain place because there is a large snake there, people would be very cautious to go there because they fear for their safety. If the disbelievers during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم believed that the possibility of Judgment day could exist, they would have been foolish to make the claims they did when they knew the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be an honest person.

"It will be only a single blast and they will all immediately be present for Reckoning." Although the disbelievers regarded the advent of Judgment day to be something farfetched and impossible, it is an extremely simple matter for Allāh. When Allāh issues the command, all it takes for people to be resurrected for Judgment day is a single blast of the trumpet and everyone will present

themselves without delay.

(15) Has the story of Mūsa عليه السلام reached you? (16) When his Lord called him on the blessed valley of Tuwa. (17) "Go to Phara'oh (Fir'oun) for he has certainly transgressed." (18) "Tell him, 'Do you want to be purified?'" (19) "'And should I guide you to your Lord so that you may fear (Him)?'" (20) So he showed him a great sign. (21) But he falsified and disobeyed. (22) Then he turned away and applied himself. (23) He gathered the people and proclaimed... (24) .... "I am your highest Lord!" (25) So Allāh seized him with the punishment of this world and the Hereafter. (26) There is certainly a lesson in this for the one who fears.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was from the Bani Isrā'īl who lived in Egypt from the time of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. The Copts of Egypt greatly oppressed the Bani Isrā'īl and made their lives miserable. It was during these trying times that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born. Upon direction from Allāh Ta'āla, his mother placed him in a basket, which she put in the river. When the basket passed by phara'oh's *(Fir'oun's)* palace, phara'oh's *(Fir'oun's)* wife had it removed from the river. When she saw the child inside, she was overwhelmed with the child and beseeched phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* to keep the child as a son in the palace. Consequently, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام grew up in phara'oh's *(Fir'oun's)* palace. When he grew up, he killed a Copt by mistake when he tried to assist an Isrā'īli. When the news reached phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his ministers, they decided to execute Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Learning of their intention, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left Egypt and settled in Madyan where he married and tended the goats of his father-in-law for ten years.

He then decided to return to Egypt with his wife but lost the way. Eventually, he saw what appeared to be a fire in the distance. Thinking that he could get a brand of fire to keep his wife warm and find someone to direct him, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام set out in the direction of the *'fire"*. When he reached the sacred valley of Tuwa where the *'fire"* was, Allāh addressed him and made him a Nabi (*Prophet*). Allāh asked him to throw down his staff, which Allāh made into a snake and Allāh also showed him that his hand could become a shining lamp by placing it beneath his arm. Allāh also commanded him to preach to phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and his people. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Has the story of Mūsa عليه السلام reached you? When his Lord called him on the blessed valley of Tuwa (He said to him) 'Go to phara'oh (Fir'oun) for he has certainly transgressed. Tell him,*

'Do you want to be purified? And should I guide you to your Lord so that you may fear (Him)?

Complying with Allāh's command, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left for Egypt where he was joined by his brother Hārūn عليه السلام whom Allāh had also made a Nabi (*Prophet*) at Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام request. Entering phara'oh's *(Fir'oun's)* court, they warned him about Allāh's punishment if he did not desist from his evil ways. They told him, *'it has been revealed to us that punishment shall be for those who falsify and turn away.* "Hearing that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام preached the divinity of Allāh, Phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* was extremely upset because he indoctrinated the people into believing that he was their god. He asked Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام a series of questions to intimidate him, but Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام answered the questions with great courage. Unable to win any ground from Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* finally said, *"If you take another as a deity besides myself I shall definitely make you of the prisoners!'* Mūsa عليه السلام said, 'Even if I bring you a clear proof?' phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* said, 'Bring it if you are truthful. *'So Mūsa عليه السلام cast down his staff and it suddenly became a manifest serpent. And he withdrew his hand, which instantly turned white for all to see."* [*Surah Shu'arā (26), verses 29-33*]

It is with reference to these miracles that Allāh says, *"So he [Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] showed him phara'oh (Fir'oun) a great sign.* " However, instead of accepting, phara'oh *(Fir'oun)' Falsified and disobeyed."* Phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* then declared that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was a magician and arranged a contest between Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the magicians of the land. Not only did Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام defeat the magicians, but he made them all believers. However, phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* was still adamant not to accept and continued claiming his divinity. Allāh says that phara'oh *(Fir'oun) "turned away and applied himself* to find a way to stop the spread of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام message. *"He gathered the people and proclaimed, 'I am your highest Lord!"* However, all his schemes failed and he was eventually drowned with his entire army. Allāh says, *"So Allāh seized him with the punishment of this world and the Hereafter."*

Allāh says about phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* in Surah Hūd, *"He will lead his people on the Day of Judgement and enter them into the Fire. It is an evil place indeed where they shall be entered."* About him and his army, Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"We set a curse after them in this world.and on the day of Judgment, they shall be among the hateful."*

Allāh declares, *"There is certainly a lesson in this for the one who fears."* People who are concerned that they should not suffer the same plight because of disobedience will heed the lessons in this episode. However, those who are heedless of the warnings and who do not care to apply their intelligence will continue to disobey Allāh. Like Fir'oun and his people, they will also destroy themselves.

The details of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام story is discussed in Surah Yunus [*Surah 10, verses 75-92*], Surah TāHā [*Surah 20, verses 9-98*], Surah Naml [*Surah 27, verses 7-14*], Surah Qasas [*Surah 28, verses 3-50*] and several other Surahs as well.

(27) Are you more difficult to create or the sky? Allāh has created it... (28) elevated its roof perfected it... (29) ....made its night dark and made its day manifest. (30) Thereafter, Allāh spread out the earth. (31) He extracted from the earth her water and fodder... (32) .. and firmly stationed the mountains. (33) All this for your benefit and for the benefit of your animals.

Further addressing those who reject the coming of Judgment day, Allāh asks, *"Are you more difficult to create or the sky?"* Because the sky is a much larger creation and contains so many phenomena, any person will understand that its creation should be more difficult than the creation of a man. If Allāh has the power to create the sky, he certainly has the power to resurrect man on the Day of Judgment. Not only did Allāh create the sky, Allāh also *"elevated its roof perfected it, made its night dark and made its day manifest."* Allāh relates the night and day to the sky because it appears as if they extend from the sky.

After creating the sky, *"Allāh spread out the earth. He extracted from the earth her water and fodder and firmly stationed the mountains (to stabilise the earth). All this for your benefit and for the benefit of your animals."* It is therefore incumbent upon man to express gratitude to Allāh for all these bounties and to believe in the divine scriptures and whatever Allāh has revealed to His Prophets عليهم السلام. Refer to the commentaries of verses 9 to 12 of Surah HāMīm Sajdah (*Surah 41*) for details about the sequence in which Allāh created the heavens and the earth.

فَإِذَا جَآءَتِ ٱلطَّآمَّةُ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰ (34) يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مَا سَعَىٰ (35) وَبُرِّزَتِ ٱلْجَحِيمُ لِمَن يَرَىٰ (36) فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَىٰ (37) وَءَاثَرَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا (38) فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ (39) وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ (40) فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ (41) يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا (42) فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكْرَىٰهَآ (43) إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَىٰهَآ (44) إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرُ مَن يَخْشَىٰهَا (45) كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَىٰهَا (46)

(34) So when the tremendous calamity befalls... (35) ... that day man will recall what he did... (36) .... and Hell will be manifest for those who look on. (37) As for the one who transgresses... (38) ... and who prefers the life of this world... (39) ...then Hell shall certainly be his abode. (40) As for the one who fears standing before his Lord and who restrains himself from carnal passions... (41) .... then Heaven shall definitely be his abode. (42) They ask you about when Judgment Day will take place. (43) What have you to tell about it? (44) To your Lord belongs (the knowledge of) its term. (45) You are a warner only to him who

fears it. (46) The day when they see it, it will seem as if they lived only an evening or a morning.

Referring to Judgment day, Allāh says, *"So when the tremendous calamity befalls, that day man will recall what he did and Hell will be manifest for those who look on."* The Arabic word "tāmma" (translated above as "calamity") is derived from the word "tāmma "which refers to something that rises above and overwhelms everything else. Judgment Day is therefore referred to as "tāmma" because it is a calamity that overwhelms all other calamities.

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه states that *"the tremendous calamity"* refers to the second blowing of the trumpet. When Judgment Day takes place, every person will realise whether his deeds are good enough to take him to Heaven or whether they are lacking. On that day there will be only two groups, as Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"A group shall be in Heaven, while another shall be in the Blaze."* [*Surah 42, verse 7*]

Allāh refers to these two groups individually. Speaking of those destined for Hell, Allāh says, *"As for the one who transgresses and who prefers the life of this world, then Hell shall certainly be his abode."* People generally cling to disbelief and refuse to accept Islām because they fear losing their wealth or positions. This displays their preference for this world over the Hereafter. It is for the same reason that Muslims also commit sins. Chasing after wealth, fame and position leads people to commit sins, to neglect their Obligatory and Compulsory obligations and to involve themselves in everything that violates Allāh's commands. On the other hand, when a person gives preference to the life Hereafter, he will be conscious about leading a life of piety and will stay far from sin.

Allāh then speaks about the second type of person when He says, *"As for the one who fears standing before his Lord and who restrains himself from carnal passions, then Heaven shall definitely be his abode."* Whenever a person wants to do good and abstain from evil, his carnal self presents an obstacle. One's carnal self wants only pleasure and enjoyment and loves the world for this. It has no inclination for the Hereafter because its concern is only for the pleasures of this world. It will therefore spur a person on to commit sins and to lead a life of recklessness. Therefore, when a person gains control over his carnal self (his Nafs), he will be able to abstain from sin and will content himself with what is Halāl (*lawful*) instead of Harām (*unlawful*). Such people will attain the high ranks of Heaven.

The person who fears standing for reckoning before Allāh will receive two gardens of Heaven, as Allāh says in Surah Rahmān, *"The one who fears standing in the presence of his Lord shall have two gardens."* [*Surah 55, verse 46*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I fear most for my Ummah that they follow the dictates of their Nafs (*Carnal self*) and that they entertain lengthy hopes. The desires of the Nafs (*carnal self*) prevents one from the truth and lengthy hopes make one forget about the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. This world is travelling and leaving while the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is travelling and approaching Each has its sons, so if you can avoid being a son of this world then do so. Today you are in the place of deeds (the world) where there is no reckoning and tomorrow you will be in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* where there are no deeds (only reckoning)." [*"Mishkāt" p. 444*]

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"They ask you about when Judgment day will take place."* The disbelievers actually asked about Judgment day mockingly because they did not really want to know when it will occur. Allāh says to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"What have you to tell about it?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could not inform them about when Judgment day will take place because he was not informed about its date. *"To your Lord belongs (the knowledge of) its term.* "Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"They ask you regarding Judgment day, when will it occur? Say, 'The knowledge of this is with my Lord. Only He will manifest it on its time. It will be weighty on the heavens and the earth and will appear suddenly.' They ask you as if you have perfect knowledge of it. Say, 'The knowledge of this is only with Allāh, but most people do not know."* [*Surah 7, verse 187*]

Allāh says, *"You are a warner only to him who fears it."* Those who have no concern for Judgment day will not heed a thousand warnings of Judgment day. However, a single warning suffices for the one who is concerned about his plight in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"The day when they see it will seem as if they lived only an evening or a morning."* People persistently ask about the date of Judgment Day as if they are looking forward to it. All they intend doing is to mock the belief. However, when they see Judgment day taking place before their very eyes, they will regret their ways and their lives of tens or even hundreds of years will seem even less than a day. The life which they thought would never end, will seem like only a dream.

سورة عبس

Makkan	Surah Abas	Verses 42

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) He frowned and turned away... (2) ..because a blind man came to him. (3) How do you know that perhaps he will be purified... (4) ....or he may take heed and the advice will prove beneficial to him? (5) As for him who was indifferent ... (6) ...to him do you attend... (7) ...when there would be no blame on you if he is not purified. (8) As for him who comes running to you... (9) ...in fear... (10) ....to him you show indifference. (11) This should never be. Indeed this Qur'ān is a reminder. (12) So whoever desires should take heed. (13) It is in scriptures that are honoured... (14) ... elevated and pure... (15) ... in the hands of scribes... (16) .....who are honourable and righteous.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه was a blind prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم and was popularly known as Sayyidina Ibn Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه. Some say that his name was Amr and that his father's name was Qais. He was among the earliest Immigrants and migrated to Madinah before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It once occurred that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was propagating Islām among some of the polytheists leaders when Sayyidina Ibn Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه arrived. Because he was blind, he did not realise that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was occupied with the others and he kept insisting that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم teach him something.

Since his arrival disturbed the discussion and complying with his request would interrupt what was being said to the polytheists leaders, The Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ignored him, thinking that he could speak to him at any other time. On the other hand, the opportunity to address the Quraysh leaders was rare and if any of them accepted Islām, it would influence many others to follow. Tirmidhi reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was addressing one of the polytheists leaders whereas *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that he was speaking to Utba bin Rabī'ah, Abu Jahl, Abbās bin Abdul Muttalib, Ubay bin Khalf and Umayyah bin Khalf. Allama Baydawi رحمة الله عليه merely states that some leaders of the Quraysh were present.

The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم reaction became evident on his face when he frowned. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"He frowned and turned away because a blind man came to him.* "Here Allāh refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as he third person to maintain his honour. It is only afterwards that Allāh addresses him as the second person when Allāh says, *"How do you know that perhaps he will be purified or he may take heed and the advice will prove beneficial to him?"* Because Sayyidina Ibn Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه was a believer, any advice given to him would have benefited him and served to purify him.

On the other hand, *"As for him who was indifferent, to him do you attend when there would be no blame on you if he is not purified."* The polytheists leaders were indifferent towards the advice given to them. There was no need for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to preach to them persistently because he was not obliged to make them believe.

Allāh continues, *"As for him who comes running to you in fear, to him you show indifference."* Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم 's intention was laudable, Allāh chided him because the hearts of the men of *"Suffa"* should not be hurt and to make it clear that a poor believer is better than a wealthy disbeliever. The message here is the same as contained in verse 52 of Surah An'ām (*Surah 6*) where Allāh says, *"Do not shun those who call unto their Lord morning and evening, aspiring for His pleasure. You are not accountable at all for them, nor are they at all accountable for you, that you shun them and become of the oppressors."* The same message is conveyed in Surah Kahf where Allāh says, *"Restrain yourself with those who, seeking His pleasure, call to their Lord morning and evening. And do not shift your attention from them with the intent of acquiring the adornment of this worldly life."* [*Surah 18, verse 28*]

After the revelation of this Surah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم showed special regard for Sayyidina Ibn Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to see him approach, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would say, *"Welcome to the one concerning whom my Lord has chided me."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would then ask him several times if he needed anything. *"Isti'āb"* and *"Isābah"* mention that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم appointed Sayyidina Ibn Ummi Maktūm رضى الله عنه as governor of Madinah thirteen times when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left on expeditions. In the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم absence, he was in charge of affairs in Madinah and would lead the Ṣalāh.

Allāh says further, *"This should never be"* i.e. you should never ignore a believer who comes to you to learn the religion because *"Indeed this Qur'ān is a reminder. So whoever desires should take heed"* The duty of the Holy Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم was to propagate the message of Islām and he was not charged with making people believe. If anyone refused to believe, it was to his own detriment and his disbelief would not harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the least.

Allāh then describes the Qur'ān itself when He says, *"It is in scriptures that are honoured, elevated and pure (in Allāh's sight because the Satan cannot reach there); in the hands of scribes who are honourable and righteous."* The Qur'ān is preserved in the "Lowhul Mahfūdh (*The protected tablet*)" where noble and pious angels record events.

(17) Woe be to man! How ungrateful is he? (18) From what did Allāh create him? (19) From a drop of semen. Allāh created him, made him in due proportion... (20) . . . and then eased the way for him. (21) Allāh then gave him death and concealed him in a grave. (22) Then Allāh shall resurrect him when He wills. (23) Behold! Man has not done what Allāh has commanded him.

These verses discuss man's ingratitude and his creation. Allāh says, *"Woe be to man! How ungrateful is he?"* Allāh created man and showers innumerable favours on him but he does not thank Allāh for them. Even worse is that man who refuses to accept Allāh as his Lord.

"From what did Allāh create him? From a drop of semen. Allāh created him, made him in due proportion." If man ponders about his beginnings, he will truly humble himself before Allāh. Allāh developed the sperm cell from its original lowly state and eventually fashioned a human being with functioning organs and limbs. Allāh has also made the parts of the body in perfect proportion so that they may function optimally. Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"Was he (man) not a discharge of semen after which he developed into a clot of blood and then Allāh created him and perfected him?"* [*Surah 75, verses 37,3 8*]

After creating man, Allāh *"then eased the way for him."* Allāh led the foetus through the various stages of its development and when the child was ready to be born, Allāh made it possible for it to emerge whole through an extremely narrow exit.

Furthermore, *"Allāh then gave him death and concealed him in a grave."* Life and death are in Allāh's control. Man has no control over life, no control over death and no control over the life after death either. Allāh has taught man to bury the dead because burial is most befitting for man's honour. Leaving a corpse above the ground to be ravaged by animals who scatter the bones about does not accord man's body the respect it deserves. Every body therefore gets the respect it deserves. The treatment it receives after the burial depends on the deeds of the person in this world.

There are certain nations who cremate their dead and others who feed their dead to vultures. These are nations who do not follow a divine religion and are therefore grossly misguided. However, even their dead eventually end up in the ground because the ashes of the deceased come to rest on the ground and the vultures who devoured the corpse become dust after their death. In this regard Allāh says in Surah Mursalāt, *"Have We not made the earth consist of both the living and the dead?"* [*Surah 77, verses 25,26*]

Allāh states further that after creating man, perfecting him and causing him to die, *"Then Allāh shall resurrect him when He wills."* Death is not the end of a person. After death, people will have to account for whatever they did in this world and face the rewards or punishment they deserve.

"No! (Man has certainly not expressed gratitude. In addition to this) Man has not done what Allāh has commanded him." Some commentators state that this refers to breaching the pledge of "Alist". Whereas man pledged to acknowledge only Allāh as his Lord, he breached the pledge after coming to this world. The verse could also refer to man's disobeying the commands of the Prophets عليهم السلام and what is contained in the divine scriptures. Of course, the verse refers to the condition of man in general and to all of mankind collectively.

(24) Let man look at his food. (25) We make the rain pour forth in abundance. (26) Then We cause the earth to part into clefts. (27) We then grow in the earth grains... (28) grapes, vegetables... (29) ..... olives, date palms... (30) .... dense gardens... (31) ... fruit and fodder... (32) ...for your benefit and for the benefit of your animals.

Allāh commands man to reflect for a while. Allāh says, *"Let man look at his food"* Man should ponder about the various types of food that Allāh causes to grow from the ground such as *'grains, grapes, vegetables, olives, date palms, dense gardens, fruit and fodder.* "Allāh has created fruit for enjoyment and fodder for man's animals. Then too, these fruit and other food do not grow sparsely so that only one or two are available. Allāh causes them to grow in abundance from huge plantations so that entire nations are fed.

Allāh has made the rain a means for all these foods to grow. When the rain seeps into the ground, Allāh causes the seed of the plant to split and the shoot to sprout from it. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"We make the rain pour forth in abundance. Then We cause the earth to part into clefts."* Allāh has taken care of all this *'for your benefit and for the benefit of your animals."* Man should ponder about these phenomena and express gratitude to Allāh for all of this. Together with verbal gratitude, man should also show his gratitude by using Allāh's bounties in a manner that pleases Allāh. At the same time, he should always turn to Allāh in repentance.

(33) So when the deafening scream will come... (34) ..... .on that day man will flee from his brother... (35) ..... .his mother, his father... (36)...his wife and his sons. (37) On that day every one of them will be preoccupied with a predicament that will make him oblivious of another. (38) On that day many faces shall be radiant... (39) .....laughing and happy. (40) And many faces will be dusty... (41) ... .covered in darkness. (42) These will be the sinful disbelievers.

Allāh depicts the scene of Judgment Day in these verses. Allāh says, *"So when the deafening scream will come..." (i.e. the second blowing of the trumpet on the Day of Judgment), on that day man will flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his wife and his sons. On that day every one of them will be preoccupied with a predicament that will make him oblivious of another."*

Referring to the faces of the pious believers, Allāh says, *"On that day many faces shall be radiant, laughing and happy."* On the other hand, concerning the faces of those who forgot Allāh in this world and who continued to sin and cling to disbelief, Allāh says *"And many faces will be dusty, covered in darkness. These will be the sinful disbelievers."* They will look like this because of their humiliation and fear on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"And many faces on that day will be gloomy, sensing that they will be dealt with most severely."* [Surah 75, verses 24,25]

Allāh says in Surah Al Imrān, *"The day when some faces will be illuminated while others shall be darkened, As for those whose faces shall be darkened, it will be said to them, 'Had you disbelieved after believing? So taste the punishment because of your disbelief' As for those whose faces shall be illuminated, they will be in the mercy of Allāh, where they shall abide forever."* [*Surah 3, verses 106,107*]

سورة التكوير

Makkan	Surah Al-Takwīr	Verses 29

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِذَا ٱلشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ (1) وَإِذَا ٱلنُّجُومُ ٱنكَدَرَتْ (2) وَإِذَا ٱلْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ (3) وَإِذَا
ٱلْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ (4) وَإِذَا ٱلْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ (5) وَإِذَا ٱلْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ (6) وَإِذَا
ٱلنُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ (7) وَإِذَا ٱلْمَوْءُۥدَةُ سُئِلَتْ (8) بِأَىِّ ذَنۢبٍ قُتِلَتْ (9) وَإِذَا ٱلصُّحُفُ
نُشِرَتْ (10) وَإِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ كُشِطَتْ (11) وَإِذَا ٱلْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ (12) وَإِذَا ٱلْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ (13)
عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أَحْضَرَتْ (14)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) When the sun loses its light. (2) When the stars fall down. (3) When the mountains are made to fly about. (4) When pregnant camels are forsaken. (5) When wild animals are gathered. (6) When the oceans are set alight. (7) When souls are joined. (8) When the girl buried alive will be asked... (9) ... .for what sin she was killed. (10) When the records of deeds will be opened. (11) When the sky will be opened. (12) When Hell will be fuelled. (13) When Heaven will be brought close. (14) On that day every soul will know what (deeds) it had presented.

This Surah is called Surah Takwīr or Surah Kuwwirat. The above verses describe what will happen on the Day of Judgment. Some of the events described will take place after the first blowing of the trumpet while others will take place after the second blowing of the trumpet.

The following six events will take place after the first blowing of the trumpet:

1. *"When the sun loses its light."* The literal meaning of the Arabic word *"kuwwirat"* (translated above as *"loses its light")* is *"to fold"*. It is well within Allāh's power to literally fold the sun. However, commentators like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه say that the light of the sun will be folded i.e. the sun will lose its light.

2. *"When the stars fall down."*

3. *"When the mountains are made to fly about."* This has been referred to in Surah TāHā, Surah Naml, Surah Wāqi'ah and Surah Muzzammil. The mountains will fly about like the clouds and eventually be reduced to dust.

4. *"When pregnant camels are forsaken."* The Arabic word *"ishār"* (translated above as *"pregnant camels "*) is the plural of the word *"ashrā"* which refers to a camel that is in her tenth month of pregnancy. Although such an animal is generally prized, no one will be interested in her when Judgment of Day takes place. The same will apply to everything else that people prize.

5. *"When wild animals are gathered."* While some commentators interpret the verse to mean that all wild animals will die on the Day of Judgment, others interpret it to mean that retribution will be taken from every animal that oppressed another in any way. This interpretation is in keeping with a hadith in which it is mentioned that a hornless goat will have revenge from the horned goat that butted it in the world. When revenge is exacted from all the animals, Allāh will command them, *"Become dust!"* Mention of a goat is merely by way of example because the same will apply to all animals. In fact, a hadith reported in "Ruhul Ma'āni" states that revenge will even be exacted from ants. This will of course take place after the second blowing of the trumpet. If this interpretation is applied, it may be said that the verses of the Surah merely state the events of Judgment Day collectively without specifying the sequence.

6. *"When the oceans are set alight." "Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that the waters of the ocean will be heated and eventually dried up. Fire will then take its place.

Thereafter, Allāh mentions six events that will take place after the second blowing of the trumpet:

1. *"When souls are joined."* After the disbelievers are separated from the believers, the members of each group will be joined with each other. Allāh says in Surah Ibrāhīm, *"On that day you will see the criminals shackled together in fetters."* [*Surah 14, verse 49*]

2. *"When the girl buried alive will be asked for what sin she was killed."* The Arab Polytheists during the period of ignorance disliked having daughters and used to bury their infant daughters alive. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"When any of them is given the glad tidings of a daughter, his face darkens and he suppresses his fury. He hides from the people because of the evil tidings that he received. Must he keep her with disgrace or bury her in the sand? Evil indeed is the decision that he takes!"* Such people will be taken to task on the Day of Judgment.

3. *"When the records of deeds will be opened"* Every person will receive his record of deeds on the Day of Judgment. The successful ones will receive theirs in their right hands while the unsuccessful ones will receive theirs in their left hands. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"We shall cast every person's record of deeds upon his neck. On the Day of Judgment We shall take out for him a book that he will see opened before him. 'Read your book. Today you are a sufficient witness against yourself"* [*Surah 17, verses 13,14.*]

Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"The record of deeds shall be placed and you*

will see the sinners afraid of what is contained in them. They will say, 'Woe be to us! What is with this book that it does not leave anything small or large unrecorded?' They will find their deeds present and your Lord shall not oppress anyone. "[*Surah 18, verse 50*]

4. *"When the sky will be opened."*

5. *"When Hell will be fuelled"* to make it burn more intensely.

6. *"When Heaven will be brought close"* to the pious just as Hell will be brought close to the disbelievers; as Allāh says in Surah Shu'arā, *"Heaven will be brought close to the pious while Hell will be revealed to the deviant ones."* [*Surah 26, verses 90,91*]

When all these events will take place, *"On that day every soul will know what (deeds) it had presented"* People will then realise whether they are destined for Heaven or for Hell.

(15) I swear by the planets that recede... (16) ...that travel and hide. (17) And (I swear by) the night when it departs... (18) ...and by the morning when it takes a breath. (19) Undoubtedly this Qur'ān is a word brought by an honoured messenger Jibr'īl عليه السلام... (20) ...who is powerful and of high rank in the sight of the Owner of the Throne. (21) He is also obeyed there and trustworthy. (22) Verily your companion is not insane. (23) He certainly saw him on the clear horizon. (24) He is also not miserly with the knowledge of the unseen. (25) The Qur'ān is not the word of any accursed Satan. (26) So where are you heading? (27) It is but a great advice to the universe... (28) ....for those of you who wish to tread the straight path. (29) You cannot will anything without the will of Allāh the Lord of the universe.

Allāh takes several oaths in this Surah to assert the fact that *"Undoubtedly this Qur'ān is a word brought by an honoured messenger [Jibrīl عليه السلام]."* These verses also refute the statement of those disbelievers who claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was insane.

Allāh says, *"I swear by the planets that recede, that travel and hide."* Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه has mentioned the planets referred to in these verses are Saturn, Mercury, Jupiter, Mars and Venus. These verses refer to the rising and setting of the planets which appear like stars in the sky and the verses make it clear that they travel in their orbits as well.

"And (I swear by) the night when it departs" Some commentators translate this

verse as *"By the night when it brings darkness"*. They says that this interpretation is more appropriate because it refers to the beginning of the night and the next verse [viz. *"by the morning when it takes a breath"*] refers to the closing of the night i.e. the arrival of the day. In this way, they maintain, both parts of the night are referred to.

Allāh swears these oaths to assert that *"Undoubtedly this Qur'ān is a word brought by an honoured messenger.* [Jibrīl عليه السلام], *who is powerful and of high rank in the sight of the Owner of the Throne. He is also obeyed there* (in the heavens) *and trustworthy."*

The fact that Allāh entrusted Jibrīl عليه السلام to convey revelation to the Prophet عليه السلام proves that he must certainly be trustworthy.

After mentioning Jibrīl عليه السلام, Allāh Ta'āla speaks of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says, *"Verily your companion is not insane."* The Polytheists of Makkah knew the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم very well and they were convinced that none could be more truthful and honest than he. Therefore, since the veracity of the angelic messenger and that of the human messenger is proven beyond doubt, it would be foolish to doubt the truth of the Qur'ān.

The author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* writes that the oaths Allāh takes in these verses are extremely apt. While the travelling and hiding of the planets symbolise the travelling of the angels and their disappearance into the heavens, the departure of the night and arrival of the day symbolise the departure of the darkness of disbelief and arrival of the light of guidance, the cause of this being the Qur'ān.

"He [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *certainly saw him* [Jibrīl عليه السلام] on *the clear horizon."* Jibrīl عليه السلام normally met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the appearance of a prophet's companions (*Sahabi*) by the name of Sayyidina Dihya Kalbi رضى الله عنه. However, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him twice in his original form. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him once at the *"Sidratul Muntahā"* on the night of Mi'rāj (*Ascension*) and again on the horizon when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in the Ajyād district of Makkah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw that he had six hundred wings and that they spanned across thee horizon. [*Tirmidhi*]

Allāh continues to says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *"is also not miserly with the knowledge of the unseen"* i.e. he conveys all the revelation that he is charged to convey.

"The Qur'ān is not the word of any accursed Satan. So where are you heading?" Once it has been established that the messenger angel has all the right credentials and the messenger Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم is also truthful beyond doubt, how can one wander astray thinking that the Qur'ān is doubtful? In addition to this, it has also been proven that the Qur'ān is neither the word of a Satan, nor a sooth-sayer, nor a madman, nor a poet nor a person who has ulterior motives. *"It (the Qur'ān) is but a great advice to the universe, for those of you who wish tread the straight path. (However) You cannot will anything without the will of Allāh the Lord of the universe."* "Everything is in Allāh's control, even guidance.

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Makkan	Surah Infitār	Verses 19

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) When the sky splits... (2) ....the stars fall... (3) . . .the oceans are poured forth... (4) . . .and graves tipped over... (5) . . .every soul shall come to know what it had sent ahead and left behind.

These verses also depict the scene of Judgment Day. Allāh Ta'āla says, *"When the sky splits, the stars fall, the oceans are poured forth (i.e. fresh and salt water bodies will merge to become one mass of water) and graves tipped over (i.e. corpses will emerge from their graves), every soul shall come to know what it had sent ahead and left behind"* While the first three occurrences will take place after the first blowing of the trumpet, the fourth will take place after the second blowing.

The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that when all waters become one, they will seep into the earth and no water will be left on the surface of the earth.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ ﴿٦﴾ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّىٰكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾ فِيٓ أَيِّ صُورَةٖ مَّا شَآءَ رَكَّبَكَ ﴿٨﴾

(6) 0 man! What has cast you into deception concerning your Magnanimous Lord... (7) ... Who has created you, perfected you, gave you due proportion... (8) .. . and made you in the fashion He desired.

Describing the creation of man, Allāh Ta'āla reminds man to turn his attention towards Allāh. Man was absolutely nothing when Allāh created him, perfected his form and, according to His perfect wisdom, made him as He pleased. Neither did man have the option to be created nor did he have a choice to decide his height, size or features. Every person is as Allāh made him and lives in this condition. It is now incumbent on every man to accept the

commands of Allāh that His Prophets عليهم السلام taught and to practise Allāh's religion.

Among men there are those who have accepted Allāh's Religion and those who have rejected. There are also those who have accepted Allāh's religion but they still neglect His commands. They do not fulfil the Farā'idh (*obligations*) and continue sinning. When it is brought to their attention that this type of life is incorrect, their Nafs (*carnal self*) and Satan fool them into thinking that there is no need to curb their ways because Allāh is Magnanimous and will continue forgiving them. They fail to realise that because Allāh is so Magnanimous, He deserves to be obeyed.

The weakness of man is that he has no sense of loyalty and is not faithful to Allāh. Despite the innumerable bounties that Allāh bestows on man, man still disobeys Him. Even if it were certain that every sin will be forgiven without punishment, it would still be incumbent to obey Allāh's commands. Obeying Allāh's commands merely because one fears punishment is a sign of disloyalty. A loyal servant shivers at the mere thought of disobeying Allāh. Such a servant looks at the great bounties that Allāh blesses him with and without concentrating only on the punishment for disobedience, he applies himself to fulfilling the command at hand. In fact, he regards leading a life of disobedience as a punishment of its own. Although punishment causes physical pain, the pain that the faithful servant feels when he is found to be disloyal is greater than the pain of any punishment.

(9) It should never be! The fact is that they deny retribution. (10) Verily there are guardians upon you... (11) ... who are noble and are recording. (12) They know what you do. (13) Indeed the righteous shall be immersed in bounties... (14) .... and the sinners will surely be in Hell... (15) .... which they will enter on the Day of Retribution. (16) They will certainly not be absent from it. (17) Do you know what the Day of Retribution is? (18) Do you really know what the Day of Retribution is? (19) It shall be a day when one soul will be unable to benefit another soul in the least. On that day all authority will be Allāh's.

Allāh says, *"It should never be!"* i.e. one should never be deceived by his Nafs (*carnal self*) and by Satan. By being deceived, one will harm only oneself. The result of this is that people will deny that retribution will take place and they will become reckless in their behaviour. For this reason, Allāh reminds them, *"Verily there are guardians upon you who are noble (in Allāh's sight) and are recording. They know what you do."* It is therefore best for people to carry out good deeds and to refrain from sins.

Allāh then briefly describes the retribution that will take place on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says, *"Indeed the righteous shall be immersed in bounties and the sinners will surely be in Hell which they will enter on the Day of Retribution. They will certainly not be absent from it."* They will have to suffer eternally in Hell and will be unable to escape. Allāh refers to the same in Surah Mā'idah when he says, *"They will try to escape from the fire, but they will not be able to escape and theirs will be a permanent chastisement."* [*Surah 5, verse 37*]

Allāh continues, *"Do you know what the Day of Retribution is? Do you really know what the Day of Retribution is?"* People should therefore be concerned about their plight on the Day of Judgment. Allāh then briefly describes the Day of Judgment when he says, *"It shall be a day when one soul will be unable to benefit another soul in the least. On that day all authority will be Allāh's."* Although many people have been vested with some authority in this world, they will all be helpless on the Day of Judgment. They have no authority to do anything but will rather be on the receiving end, requiring assistance from others. However, none will be able to assist another.

سورة المطففين

Makkan	Surah Mutaffifin	Verses 36

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Woe to the cheaters... (2) ...who, when they take measure from mankind, demand in full. (3) But if they measure or weigh for people, they reduce. (4) Do such people not consider that they will be raised... (5) ... unto an awful day ... (6) ..the day when all of mankind will stand before the Lord of the universe?

Surah Mutaffifin is also called Surah Tatfif. The word *"Tatfif"* refers to diminishing quantities when weighing or measuring (cheating). A common method of measuring quantities of grain in previous times was by filling utensils of standardised sizes.

The above verses condemn the act of cheating people when weighing or measuring for them. Allāh speaks of people who cheat others who buy from them and when they buy from others, they watch carefully to see that they are given their share in full. Allāh reminds such people about the Day of Judgment when they will be taken to task for their misdeeds and punished accordingly. In fact, the punishment for the sin of cheating in weight and measure is also experienced in this world. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to those who cheat in weighing and measuring that they have been given to a sin that caused people of previous nations to be destroyed in this world. [*"Mishkāt"*]

The nation of Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام started the evil practice of cheating in weight and measure. Despite his persistent efforts to reform them, the people refused to desist from this evil. Eventually, Allāh's punishment destroyed them. The details of this have been discussed in the commentary of Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 176-191*] and Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 85-92*].

The *"Mu'atta"* of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abdullah bin

Abbās رضی الله عنه that sustenance is constrained for those who cheat in weight and measure. This means that they will either be given less sustenance or that they will be deprived of blessings in their sustenance.

It is Harām (*Unlawful*) to give a customer less than the weight or the measurement for which he has paid. On the contrary, the Shari'ah has encouraged traders to give the customer more than what he pays for. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once passing by a person who was employed to measure for a trader. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, *"Measure and give more."*

Just as it is Harām (*unlawful*)to reduce when weighing and measuring, it is also sinful to reduce in other matters and such an act will considerably reduce the rewards of one's good deeds as well. Every believer has accepted to fulfil a set of responsibilities which he owes to Allāh and to fellow man. Cheating in these responsibilities also constitute sin. The *"Mu'atta"* of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه reports a Hadith in which Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه, after performing Salāh, met a person who was not present for the Asr Salāh. Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه asked him what had prevented him from performing Asr Salāh, to which he presented some excuse. To this Sayyidina Umar عليه السلام replied, *"You have cheated!"* (i.e. cheated yourself by depriving yourself of the rewards for performing Salāh in congregation). After reporting this narration, Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه writes that everything can either be completed properly or one may cheat in completing it.

Cheating can take place in several other manners as well such as:

- *Omitting the Sunnah acts of salāh.*
- *Omitting the Sunnah acts of Hajj and Umrah.*
- *Fasting without abstaining from sins like backbiting.*
- *Reciting the Qur'an incorrectly.*
- *Not paying zakāh in full.*

While one will be depriving oneself of the complete rewards for these deeds, certain acts may completely nullify one's good deed e.g. reciting the Qur'ān incorrectly in Salāh may nullify one's Salāh.

Another form of *"Tatfif'* (cheating) is when an employee is employed to work for an agreed number of hours but accepts his full salary for working less hours. An employee is obliged to do the work he is being paid for. It is Harām (*unlawful*)for one to accept one's full salary when the desired work is incomplete or incorrect. An employee will be guilty of *"Tatfif"* if he uses his working hours to engage in activities that are not related to his work such as smoking or idle chatter. It is unfortunately the practice of many employees to work diligently while the employer is watching but to engage in something else when his back is turned. The person doing this is guilty of *"Tatfif'*.

Also guilty of *"Tatfif'* is the employee who does something contrary to what he is paid for or who accepts a bribe to do something because of his position of employment. While the bribe is in itself Harām (*unlawful*), part of his salary will also become Harām (*unlawful*) for him because he is not doing what he is being

paid for.

Reminding man about the consequences of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Do such people not consider that they will be raised unto an awful day; the day when all of mankind will stand before the Lord of the universe?"* Concerning this day, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that it will be a day when people will be immersed in their perspiration up to their ears.

Every believer should be concerned about this day when he will have to account for all his deeds before Allāh and will have to suffer the punishment for his sins. By constantly keeping this in mind, *Insha Allāh* one will neither violate the rights one owes to Allāh nor those that he owes to fellow man. The factor that contributes most towards sin is man's indifference towards the Day of Judgment.

(7) It shall never be! Verily the records of the sinners shall be in "Sijjīn". (8) How will you know what the records placed in "Sijjīn" are? (9) A sealed book. (10) May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day... (11) ...those who deny the Day of Retribution. (12) It is only every sinful transgressor who denies it. (13) When Our verses are recited to him, he says, "These are fables of the men of old" (14) Never! In fact, the rust of their sins has covered their hearts. (15) Never! They will certainly be veiled from (seeing) their Lord on that day. (16)They will then definitely enter Hell. (17) Thereafter it will be said, "This is what you used to deny."

Allāh asserts, *"It shall never be!"* i.e. it shall never be as the disbelievers think that Judgment day will not take place. Judgment Day will certainly take place. Man should never think that his words and deeds have disappeared into thin air and that he is not required to account for them. Indeed, the records of every person's deeds are preserved. Allāh says, *"Verily the records of the sinners shall be in 'Sijjīn'."* These records will be presented on the Day of Judgment and will be testimony against a person. None will be able to deny anything that he contain.

Allāh asks, *"How will you know what the records placed in 'Sijjīn' are?"* Allāh replies by saying that it is *"A sealed book"*. There can be no additions or omissions made to these records.

Allāh continues, *"May misery be the lot of the deniers on that day, those who deny the Day of Retribution. It is only every sinful transgressor who denies it. When Our verses are recited to him, he says, 'These are fables of the men of old' Never! (The Qur'ān*

can never be fables). In fact, the rust of their sins has covered their hearts." Their evil deeds, especially their infidelity and Polytheism have covered their hearts with a "rust" that prevents the truth from penetrating. They can therefore not understand the truth and persist in rebellion.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Indeed, a form of contamination settles in my heart and I repent to Allāh a hundred times daily."* [*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a believer commits a sin, a black spot forms on his heart. This spot is erased only when he repents. However, if he does not repent and continues sinning, the blackness also increases until it encompasses his heart. This blackness is the "rust" that Allāh refers to in the verse, *"Never! In fact, the rust of their sins has covered their hearts."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has prescribed Taubah (repentance) as the cure for the rust that settles on the heart. One should therefore resort to Taubah (*repentance*) as soon as one commits a sin so that the heart is never covered by the *"rust"* that` prevents one from discerning falsehood from the truth.

Concerning the plight of those who deny Judgment day, Allāh says, *"Never! They will certainly be veiled from (seeing) their Lord on that day. They will then definitely enter Hell. Thereafter it will be said, 'This is what you used to deny.'"* Imām Shāfi'ī رحمة الله عليه states that this verse also proves that the believers will be able to see Allāh Ta'āla in the Hereafter.

(18) It shall never be! Verily the records of the righteous shall be in "Illiyyīn". (19) How will you know what the records placed in "Illiyyīn" are? (20) A sealed book... (21) ... which the close angels witness.

Allāh asserts, *"It shall never be!"* i.e. it shall never be as the disbelievers think that Judgment Day will not take place because it certainly will. People should not think that their words and deeds have disappeared into thin air and that they are not required to account for them. Indeed, every person's deeds are recorded. Allāh says, *"Verily the records of the righteous shall be in 'Illiyyīn'. How will you know what the records placed in 'Illiyyīn' are? (It is) A sealed book which the close angels witness.*

"Sijjīn" *is* a place beneath the seven earths where the souls of the disbelievers are kept after death while the *"Illiyyīn"* *is* a place above the seven skies where the souls of deceased believer are kept. Explaining the deaths of the believers and the disbelievers, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that when the angel of death removes the soul of a believer, he addresses it saying, *"O pure soul, emerge towards Allāh's forgiveness and pleasure."* Consequently, the soul emerges as easily as a drop of water from a water bag. Without wasting a moment, the other angels take the soul from the hands of the angel of death and place it in the shrouds of Heaven and perfume it with the fragrances of Heaven. The Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that this fragrance is better than the best fragrances of this world. They then ascend with it to the heavens. Each time they pass by a gathering of angels, they are asked, *"Who is this pure soul?"* Taking the best of names used in the world, they furnish the name of the person with his father's name.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم continued to say that they then approach the doors of the first heaven, which is opened upon their request. In this manner, they reach the seventh heaven with the soul. Upon reaching there Allah tells them, *"Place the record of My slave in the Illiyyīn and return him to the earth, because I have created him from the earth, shall return him to it and will resurrect him from it."*

He is then returned to the grave, where he will reply correctly to all the questions. Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned the bounties that the believer will receive in the grave.

Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made mention of the death of a disbeliever. He said that when a disbeliever has to leave this world for the Hereafter, dark-faced angels descend from the heavens. They carry with them sack cloth and appear before him as far as the eyes can see. Then the angel of death himself comes, sits by the head and says, *"O foul soul! Emerge towards Allah's anger!"* The soul then disperses throughout the body in an attempt to escape. Thereafter the angel of death forcefully extracts the soul, just as wet wool wrapped around a skewer is forcefully removed.

When the angel of death removes the soul, the other angels, without losing a split second, grab hold off the soul and wrap it in the sack cloth. Such a foul odour emanates from the soul that does not emanate from any decomposing body on earth. They then take this soul up to the heavens and, whenever they pass any group of angels, they ask, *"Who is this foul soul?"* Using the worst names on earth, they reply, *"This is so and so, the son of so and so (taking the person's name)."*

When they reach the doors of the heavens, they request entry, but the doors are not opened. Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the following verse of Surah A'rāf, *"The doors of the heavens are not opened for them and they will not enter Heaven until a camel passes through the eye of a needle."* Thereafter, Allāh tells the angels to record the person's name in Sijjīn which lies beneath the lowest earth. The soul is then cast there. [*Mishkāt p. 142-143*]

(22) Verily the righteous shall be enjoying bounties... (23) ... while looking on from couches. (24) You will recognise the resplendence of bounties on their faces. (25) They will be given pure sealed wine to drink... (26) .....the seal of which is musk. It is for this that competitors should compete. (27) Its mixture

shall be of Tasnīm... (28) ...a spring from which those close to Allāh shall drink.

Allāh describes the bounties that His pious bondsmen will enjoy in Heaven. These are the people whose records shall be placed in the *"Illiyyīn"*. Allāh says, *"Verily the righteous shall be enjoying bounties while looking on from couches."* Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that these people will be able to see each other despite being far apart.

Furthermore, *"You will recognise the resplendence of bounties on their faces."* By merely looking at them, one will be realise that they are extremely happy. Referring to the same joy, Allāh says in Surah Dahar, *"So Allāh shall save them from the evil of that day and will give them resplendence and joy.* "The joy that the people of Heaven will enjoy shall be heartfelt and not merely superficial.

Referring to the drinks that they will enjoy, Allāh says, *"They will be given pure sealed wine to drink, the seal of which is musk."* One cannot imagine the exquisite taste of a wine that has a seal of pure musk. This wine will be such that it will neither intoxicate nor produce any headaches like the wine of this world. Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"Youngsters of eternal youth shall wait on them with goblets and jugs and glasses filled with flowing wine. Neither will they have headaches with it, nor will they be intoxicated."* [*Surah 56, verses 17-19*]

Encouraging the believers to do good, Allāh says, *"It is for this that competitors should compete."* Just as people compete with each other to acquire the commodities of this world, they should do the same to attain the bounties of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. People are foolish to vie with each other for things like wine which intoxicates and which produces headaches and bad breath. In addition to this, consuming it makes one sinful and deprives one of the wine of the Hereafter. Like this, all other commodities of this world are also not worth competing for. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that the following three persons will be unable to enter Heaven:

1. *The habitual drunkard?*
2. *The one who severs ties of kinship*
3. *The one who practises witchcraft.*

Further describing the drinks of Heaven, Allāh says, *"Its mixture shall be of Tasnīm, a spring from which those close to Allāh shall drink." "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that those who are really close to Allāh shall have the pure water of the Tasnīm spring to drink, whereas other inhabitants of Heaven will have only a bit of it mixed with their other drinks.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أَجۡرَمُواْ كَانُواْ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ يَضۡحَكُونَ (29) وَإِذَا مَرُّواْ بِهِمۡ يَتَغَامَزُونَ (30)
وَإِذَا ٱنقَلَبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِمُ ٱنقَلَبُواْ فَكِهِينَ (31) وَإِذَا رَأَوۡهُمۡ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَضَآلُّونَ (32)
وَمَآ أُرۡسِلُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡ حَٰفِظِينَ (33) فَٱلۡيَوۡمَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡكُفَّارِ يَضۡحَكُونَ (34) عَلَى

(29) Verily those who sin used to laugh at the believers. (30) When they passed by them, they used to wink at each other. (31) When they returned to their families, they would return jesting. (32) When they saw them, they used to say, "These people are certainly astray." (33) Yet they were never sent as warders over them. (34) However, today the believers shall laugh at the disbelievers... (35). ... while looking on from couches. (36) The fact is that the disbelievers are punished only for what they did.

After describing the bounties of the pious believers, Allāh Ta'āla speaks about the way in which the disbelievers behaved towards the believers. When they used to see a gathering of poor believers like Sayyidina Khabbāb رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Bilāl رضی الله عنه and others, they used to laugh at them and wink to each other indicating that these people claim to be worthy of Heaven whereas they do not even have clothing to cover themselves properly nor shoes to wear. They would then proceed laughing and jesting in this manner to their families. Concerning the believers, they would also say, *"These people are certainly astray."*

Allāh says that the disbelievers behave in this manner whereas *"they were never sent as warders over them"* i.e. over the believers. This means that the disbelievers will not be asked whether the believers were rightly guided or stray in the Hereafter. Therefore, instead of concerning themselves with the affairs of the believers, the disbelievers ought to worry about their own plight in the Hereafter.

On the Day of Judgment, the tables will be turned against the disbelievers and the superiority of the believers will be manifest. Whereas the disbelievers laughed at the believers in this world, *"However, today (on the Day of Judgment) the believers shall laugh at the disbelievers while looking on from couches. The fact is that the disbelievers are punished only for what they did.* "They shall then have a taste of their own medicine.

سُورَةُ الانْشِقَاق

Makkan	Surah Inshiqāq	Verses 25

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ ٱنشَقَّتْ ﴿1﴾ وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ﴿2﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ ﴿3﴾ وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا
وَتَخَلَّتْ ﴿4﴾ وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ﴿5﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا
فَمُلَٰقِيهِ ﴿6﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ﴿7﴾ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا ﴿8﴾
وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ مَسْرُورًا ﴿9﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ وَرَآءَ ظَهْرِهِۦ ﴿10﴾ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا۟ ثُبُورًا
﴿11﴾ وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ﴿12﴾ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فِىٓ أَهْلِهِۦ مَسْرُورًا ﴿13﴾ إِنَّهُۥ ظَنَّ أَن لَّن يَحُورَ ﴿14﴾ بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّ
رَبَّهُۥ كَانَ بِهِۦ بَصِيرًا ﴿15﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) When the sky will be rent asunder... (2) ... and it will hearken to its Lord as it rightly should. (3) When the earth will be stretched out... (4) . . . and, casting out whatever is within it, will become empty. (5) It will hearken to its Lord as it rightly should. (6) O man, indeed you make great efforts in your journey towards your Lord and will soon meet with (the fruit of your efforts. (7) As for him who is given his record in his right hand... (8) . .. an easy reckoning will be taken from him... (9)... and he will return happily to his family. (10) As for him who is given his record behind his back... (11) .... he will soon call for destruction... (12) ... and will enter the Blazing Fire. (13) Indeed he used to be happy among his family. (14) He used to think that he would not return. (15) He certainly will. Verily his Lord was ever Watchful over him.

Allāh begins the Surah by speaking about the condition of the sky and the earth on the Day of Judgment and then refers to the conditions of the good and the sinful on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says, *"When the sky will be rent asunder and it will hearken to its Lord as it rightly should (because it is impossible for it to disobey Allāh's command). When the earth will be stretched out and, casting out whatever is within it, will become empty."* All dead bodies will surface from beneath the earth together with the treasures that the earth hides within her. Just like the sky, the earth *"will hearken to its Lord as it rightly should."* Both the sky and the earth are obliged to obey Allāh's commands and do what He wants them to do.

These opening five verses of the Surah are followed by a hidden clause which reads, *"On that day, man will see the deeds he committed"*. The verses therefore read, *"When the sky will be rent asunder and it will hearken to its Lord ... (and) when the earth will be stretched out ... on that day, man will see the deeds he committed"*.

Allāh says in Surah Ibrahīm, *"The day when the earth will be changed into another earth, and the skies (will also be changed)."* This verse denotes that the sky and the earth will be completely changed on the Day of Judgment. At the same time, they will appear as described in the above verses of Surah Inshiqāq. There is therefore no discrepancy between this verse of Surah Ibrahīm and the verses of Surah Inshiqāq.

Allāh continues, *"O man, indeed you make great efforts in your journey towards your Lord and will soon meet with (the fruit of) your efforts."* This verse summarises man's life in this world. Everything that a person needs in this world requires some effort from him and everything that man says or does in this effort are recorded. The world is fast passing by in this manner and Judgment Day is fast approaching. In fact, every persons's individual reckoning starts when he passes away. Eventually, the trumpet will be sounded and everything will cease to exist.

When the trumpet is blown for the second time, people will emerge from their graves and present themselves before Allāh for reckoning. The records of deeds will then be distributed among mankind. Allāh says, *"As for him who is given his record in his right hand, an easy reckoning will be taken from him and he will return happily to his family."* Allāh says about such a person in Surah Hāqqah, *"As for the one who receives his record (of deeds) in his right hand, he will call out, 'Come and read my record! I was always convinced that I shall certainly meet my reckoning. So he will enjoy a pleasing life in lofty gardens. The fruit of these gardens are near at hand. (They will be told) 'Eat and drink with all blessings as a reward for the (good) deeds that you sent ahead during the days bygone.'"* [*Surah 69, verses 19-24*]

On the other hand, *"As for him who is given his record behind his back, he will soon call for destruction and will enter the Blazing Fire."* Allāh mentions in Surah Hāqqah that these people will receive their records of deeds in their left hands. These will be given to them from behind their backs. This will be when every person will *"meet with the fruit of his efforts"*. Describing such a person in Surah Hāqqah, Allāh says, *"As for the one who receives his record in the left hand, he will cry, 'Oh dear! If only I were not given my record and I had not known my reckoning! Alas! If only death had been my end!'"* [*Surah 69, verses 25-27*]

"Indeed (in the world) he used to be happy among his family." He used to enjoy himself in the world without any concern for the Day of Judgment. In addition to this, *"He used to think that he would not return"* to account for his deeds before Allāh. However, his belief was false. Allāh declares, *"He certainly will"* have to return to Allāh to account for his deeds. He was wrong to think that Allāh was unaware of his deeds because *"Verily his Lord was ever Watchful over him."*

NOTE : Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said that the person who is required to account for his deeds will be destroyed. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what was then the meaning of

the verse *"As for him who is given his record in his right hand, an easy reckoning will be taken from him"*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained that an easy reckoning means that one's deeds will merely be presented before Allāh without one being questioned. As for the person whose deeds are scrutinised, he will certainly be destroyed because he will be unable to reply. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 736 and v. 2 p. 928*]

(16) I swear by the twilight... (17) ....by the night, by what the night encompasses ... (18) ...and by the moon when is it full. (19) You will certainly proceed from phase to phase. (20) What is the matter with them that they do not believe... (21) ... and do not prostrate when the Qur'ān is recited to them? (22) Rather, the disbelievers choose to deny. (23) Allāh is well Aware of whatever they amass. (24) So give them the tidings of a painful punishment... (25) ...except for those who believe and carry out good deeds. Theirs shall be an unending reward.

Allāh Ta'āla takes an oath by several phenomena in these verses, among them the night and whatever uses the night to rest. Allāh takes all these oaths to assert that man will certainly proceed from one phase to another in his existence, with each phase becoming severer than the previous one. From this world, man proceeds to the realm of *"Barzakh"* (the existence of the grave) and then towards Judgment Day and the many stages of the Hereafter.

Allāh then asks, *"What is the matter with them that they do not believe and do not prostrate when the Qur'ān is recited to them? Rather, the disbelievers choose to deny."* Despite realising that they are fast approaching their deaths and after being given the proofs of life after death and reckoning, the disbelievers still refuse to submit and to acknowledge the divine origin of the Qur'ān. However, they should bear in mind that *"Allāh is well Aware of whatever they amass"* i.e. Allāh knows the disbelief, the polytheism and the evil that they bear in their hearts. Other commentators state that *"whatever they amass"* refers to the evil deeds that they accumulate in their records of deeds. Allāh is Aware of all this and will punish them accordingly, *"So give them the tidings of a painful punishment."* Although tidings are generally given of pleasant things, the news of punishment is referred to as "tidings" because the disbelievers anticipated that they would be successful by adhering to disbelief and polytheism.

Of course, a person will be saved from eternal damnation by repenting, accepting Islām and carrying out good deeds. Therefore, Allāh makes the exception by stating, *"except for those who believe and carry out good deeds. Theirs shall be an unending reward."*

سورة البروج

Makkan	Surah Burūj	Verses 22

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the starry sky! (2) By the promised day! (3) By the day which presents itself and the day when people are presented! (4) Accursed are the people of the trenches... (5) ...those of the heavily fuelled fire... (6) ....when they sat by the trenches... (7) ....and were witnesses to what they did to the believers. (8) They found no fault in them (the believers) except that they believed in Allāh, the Mighty, Most Worthy of praise... (9) .to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Allāh is Witness to everything.

In the chapter concerning the commentary of Surah Burūj, Imām Tirmidhi رحمة الله عليه reports a Hadith from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated that *"the promised day"* refers to the Day of Judgment, *"the day which presents itself"* refers to the day of Jumu'ah (Friday) and *"the day when people are presented"* refers to the day of Arafah (*9th of Dhul Hijjah*).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the sun does not rise or set on a day better than the day of Jumu'ah. He also mentioned that there is a moment during this day when a believer will receive any good that he prays for and will be saved from anything from which he seeks refuge.

Allāh Ta'āla owns everything by which He takes oaths in the Qur'ān, be they specific times, places or other phenomena. It is therefore obvious that anyone who opposes such a Great Being will certainly meet with destruction. An example of such people are the *"people of the trenches"*. Allāh says about them, *"Accursed are the people of the trenches, those of the heavily fuelled fire when they sat by the trenches and were witnesses to what they did to the believers.* These verses refer to disbelievers who filled trenches with fuel and kindled a raging fire. They then forced the believers to enter the trenches.

Muslim (*v. 2 p. 415*) reports from Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once recounted to His companions *(the Sahabah)* رضى الله عنهم, the story of a king who lived in bygone times. When his magician became old, he approached the king and requested him to send someone to him so that he could teach him magic. Eager that someone should continue the practice after the old magician, the king sent a boy to take lessons from the magician.

Whenever the boy came to the magician, he had to pass by a monk. One day, he sat with the monk and was very impressed by what the monk taught him. As a result, he always sat with the monk before proceeding to the magician for lessons. However, the magician used to beat him for always being late. When he mentioned this to the monk, the monk told him that whenever he feared reproach from the magician, he should excuse himself by saying that his family had delayed him. On the other hand, if he ever feared reproach from his family members, he should tell them that the magician had delayed him. In this manner, he managed to sit regularly with the monk without suffering punishment.

It once occurred that a large animal blocked the path and prevented people from passing. When the boy arrived there, he thought to himself that this would be the ideal opportunity to test whether the magician or the monk was better. He therefore picked up a stone and prayed, *"O Allāh! If the way of the monk is more beloved to you than the way of the magician, then kill this beast with this stone so that people may pass."* Consequently, when he threw the stone at the creature, the stone killed it instantly and people were able to pass by peacefully.

When the boy related the incident to the monk, the monk said, "You have now become better than me and have reached the high status that I can see. Now listen. You will now be tested (and put through difficulty). When this happens, do not tell anyone about me."

Thereafter, the boy began curing people who were born blind and those who were born with white liver i.e. Allāh cured them when he made supplication to Allāh to cure them. When a blind minister of the king heard about the boy, he took many gifts along with him and told the boy that he could have everything if he cured him of his blindness. The boy said, *"I cannot cure anyone. Only Allāh can cure. However, if you believe in Allāh, I will pray to Allāh and He will cure you."* When the minister complied, Allāh restored his sight.

When the minister returned to the king's court, the king asked him who had restored his vision. The minister replied, *"My Lord has restored my sight."* The king asked, *"Do you have a Lord besides me?"* The minister replied, *"Allāh Ta'āla is my Lord and your Lord."* The king had the minister arrested and he was tortured until he revealed the name of the boy.

When the boy was brought before the king, the king said to him, "Your magic has reached a stage where it can cure the blind and people suffering from white liver." The boy said, "I cannot cure anyone. Only Allāh can cure." The king then had him tortured until he revealed the identity of the monk. When the monk was brought before the king, the king told him to renounce his religion. When the monk refused, the king had a saw brought and, placing the saw on his head, had the monk sawed in two. The king then turned to the minister who believed in Allāh and told him to renounce his faith. When the minister refused,

the king had him also sawn in two.

Turning to the boy, the king put the same request to him. When the boy also refused, the king placed him in the custody of a few of his men and instructed them to take the boy to certain mountain and to climb up to the summit with him. If he renounced his religion there, he was to be set free, otherwise if he still refused to forsake his religion, they were to throw him off the mountain. As they climbed the mountain with him, the boy made supplication thus, *"O Allāh! Suffice for me against them in whichever manner You please."* Allāh then caused the mountain to tremor and all the king's men fell to their deaths. The boy returned alone to the king.

When the king asked where his men were, the boy replied that Allāh had protected him from their evil. The king then sent him with another party of men, instructing them to take him by ship to the middle of the ocean and to let him be if he forsook his faith. Otherwise, they were to throw him overboard. When they reached the middle of the ocean, the boy again prayed, *"O Allāh! Suffice for me against them in whichever manner You please."* As he made the supplication, the ship capsized and all the king's men were drowned. Again the boy returned alone to the king and when the king asked where his men were, the boy replied that Allāh had sufficed for him and had protected him from their evil.

The boy (Abdullāh bin Tāmir) then told the king that he would be unable to kill him by any method except one. When the king asked him what the method was, the boy said, *"Gather the people on a field and tie me to the trunk of a tree. Then, taking an arrow from this quiver of mine, place it in my bow and say, 'In the name of the Lord of this boy.' Then shoot the arrow."* The boy knew that he was to die so he thought of this method to make his death an invitation to his religion for the people. Unable to fathom this plan, the king did as he was told. He gathered the people, placed the arrow in the bow and shot it saying, *"In the name of the Lord of this boy."* The arrow struck the boy's temple and he died with his hand on the point where the arrow hit. Seeing this, the people cried out, *"We believe in the Lord of this boy!"*

The king's men came to him saying, *"What you most feared has happened"* The king then instructed his soldiers to dig trenches in the first streets of the town and to fill the trenches with fire. When this was done, the king instructed his men to bring every believer to the trenches and to tell them to renounce their faith in Allāh. If they refused, they were to be thrown into the fire. When this was done, many people were thrown into the fire. Eventually, when a woman carrying her infant child was brought to a trench, she hesitated. Allāh granted speech to her child who said, *"O mother! Be steadfast because you are certainly upon the truth."*

Tirmidhi reports the same incident with a few additions. At the beginning, the narration of Tirmidhi states that a fortune-teller of the king told him that his kingdom was soon to come to an end and it was this fortune-teller who requested the king to send an intelligent boy to him so that he could teach him his craft. This narration also states that when the masses declared, *"We believe in the Lord of this boy"*, someone told the king, *"You were afraid of opposition from three people (the boy, the monk and the minister), now look! The entire nation is against you."* It was then that the king had the trenches dug and announced, "We will say nothing to those who renounce their faith. However, those who do not renounce will be cast into the trenches." It is with reference to this incident that Allāh

revealed the verses, *"Accursed are the people of the trenches, those of the heavily fuelled fire when they sat by the trenches and were witnesses to what they did to the believers. They found no fault in them (the believers) except that they believed in Allāh, the Mighty, Most Worthy of praise."*

The narration of Tirmidhi also states that when the grave of the boy was dug up during the rule of Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه, his hand was found on his temple as when he had passed away. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has quoted Muqātil رحمة الله عليه who states that the incident of the trenches took place thrice in history. It occurred in Shām during the reign of the Roman emperor Iltanayūs, in Persia during the reign of the emperor Nebuchadnezzar (*Bakht Nasr*) and in Najrān in Yemen during the reign of the king Yusuf Dhutu was. He states that the incident that the Qur'ān refers to here in Surah Burūj is the third that occurred in Najrān.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has also quoted from Ibn Abi Hātim رحمة الله عليه that the incident occurred during the period of *'Fatrah"* i.e. after the ascension of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام but before the birth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh knows best.

"They found no fault in them (the believers) except that they believed in Allāh, the Mighty, Most Worthy of praise." Allāh states that the disbelievers had absolutely no right to kill the believers because the believers had not committed any crime. The only *"crime"* that the disbelievers saw was that the believers believed in Allāh, which is not a crime at all but rather the obligatory duty of every person.

At this juncture, the incident of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa Sahmi رضی الله عنه comes to mind, which Hāfidh Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه has narrated in *"Al Isābah"*. During his Caliph, Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه once dispatched Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضی الله عنه with an army to fight the Romans. Somehow, the Romans managed to capture them and they were brought before the Roman emperor who was a Christian. Learning that a companion of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was among the group, the Roman emperor summoned Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضی الله عنه. The discussion that took place between the two is as follows:

CHRISTIAN EMPEROR: *"I am prepared to share my kingdom with you if you accept Christianity."*

SAYYIDINA ABDULLĀH BIN HUDHĀFA رضی الله عنه: *"Your kingdom is nothing. If you give me your kingdom and if all the Arabs give me their kingdoms on condition that I renounce the Religion of Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *for the duration of even the blink of an eye, I would never do so."*

CHRISTIAN EMPEROR: *"If you do not accept Christianity, I shall have you killed"*

SAYYIDINA ABDULLĀH BIN HUDHĀFA رضی الله عنه: *"You may kill me if you please. I have said my piece. There is no possibility of my going against my words nor shall I reconsider my stance. In fact, my statement is so staunch that no believer can even fathom the opposite."*

The emperor then had Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضی الله عنه tied to a cross and instructed his archers to shoot at his arms and legs. He stressed that

they should not aim to kill because the intention was merely to make him accept Christianity. Like the incident of the *"people of the trenches"*, the only "crime" that was committed here was belief in Allāh and adherence to Allāh's Religion. As they fired the arrows through his body, they told him to renounce Islām and to accept Christianity. However, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه kept telling them that he had said his piece and would not reconsider.

When this plot failed, the emperor had him taken off the cross. The emperor then instructed that a cauldron of water be heated until the water was boiling. When this was done, another Muslim was cast inside the cauldron and he lost his life as his flesh was separated from the bones. This was done in the presence of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه. He was then asked to renounce Islām or suffer the same fate as the other Muslim. When he refused, the emperor instructed that he also be placed in the cauldron. As Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه was being placed inside, he began to weep. When the emperor was informed about this, he thought the Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه must be afraid of death and would therefore accept Christianity. When he sent for Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه and asked him to accept Christianity, the refusal was still as strong as ever. The following dialogue ensued:

CHRISTIAN EMPEROR: *"Then tell me why you wept."*

SAYYIDINA ABDULLĀH BIN HUDHĀFA رضى الله عنه: *"Standing at the cauldron, I thought that I would soon be cast into it and lose life in a short while. It is sad that I have only one life. It would have been great if I had as many lives as there are hairs on my body so that I could be repeatedly cast into this cauldron to give each one of them for Allāh. What is the use of only one life in Allāh 's way."*

CHRISTIAN EMPEROR: *"Alright, then kiss my forehead and I shall free all of you."*

SAYYIDINA ABDULLĀH BIN HUDHĀFA رضى الله عنه: *"Will I alone be freed or all the Muslims with me?"*

CHRISTIAN EMPEROR: *"If you kiss my forehead, I shall free everyone with you."*

To save his own life, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه would not have kissed the emperor's forehead because it meant honouring a disbeliever. However, in the best interests of the Muslims with him, he kissed the emperor's forehead. All the Muslims were then freed.

When they returned to Madinah and the incident was related to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, he said, "Because he kissed the forehead of a disbeliever for the freedom of the Muslims, it is necessary for every Muslim to kiss his forehead and I will be the first to do so." Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was the first to kiss the forehead of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hudhāfa رضى الله عنه.

The enemies of the Muslims who perpetrate such acts against the Muslims merely consider the strength and power they wield and fail to realise that Allāh Ta'āla is more powerful than them and that He has knowledge of everything they do. Allāh shall punish them for their atrocities. They should never think that their deeds will be left behind in this world and forgotten in the next. Allāh

refers to this when he concluded the episode by saying, *"Allāh is Witness to everything."*

(10) Verily those who harm believing men and believing women and do not repent, for them shall be the punishment of Hell and the punishment of burning. (11) Most certainly, those who believe and who carry out good deeds shall have gardens beneath which rivers flow. That is the supreme success.

Allāh sounds a warning to those people who harm the believers. This warning is general and does not specifically apply to the *"people of the trenches"* only. Concerning these people, Allāh says, *"Verily those who harm believing men and believing women and do not repent, for them shall be the punishment of Hell and the punishment of burning.* "The verse clearly states that such people will suffer this punishment if they do not repent i.e. if they do not accept Islām and show remorse for their deeds. Irrespective of what a person does as a disbeliever, all his sins are forgiven when he sincerely accepts Islām.

Allāh mentions this after the incident of the *"people of the trenches"*, indicating that He would have forgiven even them if they repented and accepted Him as their Lord. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه states, *"Look at Allāh's compassion and benevolence. They killed Allāh 's friends, yet He invites them towards repentance and forgiveness."*

Allāh then speaks about the pious believers when He says, *"Most certainly, those who believe and who carry out good deeds shall have gardens beneath which rivers flow. That is the supreme success."* This verse assures the believers that the difficulties of this world are insignificant because they will cause one to attain the *"supreme success"* of the Hereafter. Burning in a fire in this world will last for only a very short duration, while the bliss and bounties of Heaven will be perpetual.

(12) Undoubtedly, the grasp of your Lord is severe indeed. (13) Verily, it is He Who creates the first time and then creates again. (14) He is the Most Forgiving, All Loving... (15) ...Owner of the Throne, the Majestic... (16) ...and the One Who does as He pleases. (17) Has the news of the armies reached you? (18) Of

Phara'oh (Fir'oun) and the Thamud? (19) Rather the disbelievers are (persistent) in denial. (20) Allāh encompasses them from all over. (21) It is the Glorious Qur'ān. (22) ... .in the Lowhum Mahfūdh (the protected tablet).

Allāh describes His power in the above verses. Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, the grasp of your Lord is severe indeed"* Disbelieving nations should not be fooled when Allāh's punishment does not over take them swiftly. A delay in punishment does not mean that it will not arrive. Allāh has appointed a time when they will be punished and when this time arrives, they will be swept over very severely. Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"Verily, Allāh grants respite to the oppressor until the time when He seizes him and then allows no reprieve."* The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then recited the verse of Surah Hūd where Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Such is the grasp of your Lord when He seized a town that is oppressive. Indeed His grasp is painful and severe."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 678*]

Allāh then describes His creative powers when He states, *"Verily, it is He Who creates the first time and then creates again."* This verse makes it clear to those who deny Judgment Day that just as Allāh had the power to create people the first time, He is perfectly Capable of resurrecting them on the Day of Judgment. It is therefore foolish to regard Judgment Day as something farfetched.

Allāh continues to say that *"He is the Most Forgiving, All Loving, Owner of the Throne, the Majestic and the One Who does as He pleases.* "Nothing can stop Allāh from doing whatever He wills. He is at liberty to forgive the sinners, to express His love for His pious bondsmen and to punish the disbelievers. Nothing is difficult for Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Allāh will certainly admit those who believe and perform good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. Verily Allāh does as He pleases."* A few verses later, Allāh states, *"There is none to honour the person whom Allāh humiliates. Indeed, Allāh does as He pleases."* [*Surah 22, verse 18*]

Allāh states further, *"Has the news of the armies reached you, of phara'oh (Fir'oun) and the Thamūd? Rather the disbelievers are (persistent) in denial."* Allāh asks a rhetorical question to warn mankind against adopting the ways of the previously destroyed people such as phara'oh *(Fir'oun)* and nation of the Thamud. Instead of accepting the message of Allāh's Prophets علیهم السلام, these people were haughty and chose to deny Oneness of Allah and the message of the Prophets علیهم السلام. Such people should never think that Allāh is unaware of their deeds because *"Allāh encompasses them from all over."* Allāh knows every misdeed that they commit and will punish them for it as He punished those before them.

The disbelievers even deny the truth of the Qur'ān. This is only because of their obstinacy since it is impossible to reject the Qur'ān on reasonable grounds. Therefore, Allāh states, *"It is the Glorious Qur'ān in the Lowhum Mahfūdh (protected tablet).* "The Qur'ān is eternally preserved in the *"Lowhu Mahfūdh" ("The Protected Tablet")* in the heavens and it cannot be altered. It was brought by a trustworthy angel to a trustworthy Nabi (*Prophet*) صلی الله علیه وسلم. Allāh has also assumed the responsibility of preserving it. Therefore, the denial of the disbelievers will not affect its authenticity in the least.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the sky and that which appears by night.' (2) How will you know what it is that appears by night? (3) It is the bright star. (4) There is no soul with out a guardian appointed over it. (5) Man should ponder about what he was created from. (6) He was created from spurting water... (7) ..which emerges from between the backbone and the chest. (8) Verily Allāh has the power to resurrect him.

Allāh Ta'āla takes an oath by the sky and by a bright star to assert that He has appointed an angel to watch over every person. The task of these angels is to record every deed that a person carries out. Their records will be presented on the Day of Judgment and Allāh will decide every person's affair. According to this interpretation, the "guardian" refers to the recording angels referred to in Surah Infitār [*Surah 82, verses 10,11*] where Allāh says, *"Verily there are guardians upon you who are noble and are recording."*

Other commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to those angels who are commissioned to protect people, concerning whom Allāh says in Surah Ra'd, *"For everyone there are angels before him and following behind him, protecting him."* These angels are appointed with the express task of protecting people from calamities. However, the first interpretation is more apt because the Surah discusses Judgment Day and people tend to doubt its coming, thinking that they cannot be called to account for words and deeds that are said and done.

Further dispelling the doubts people express concerning resurrection, Allāh Ta'āla states, *"Man should ponder about what he was created from. He was created from spurting water which emerges from between the backbone and the chest."* This verse makes reference to the drop of semen from which man was created, which is

referred to in Surah Sajdah as "lowly water". Allāh tells man in these verses that there is no cause for him to deny that Allāh can resurrect man after man has been reduced to dust. Allāh created man from a drop of semen and nourishes and nurtures him throughout his life. Therefore, it is obvious that "Allāh has the power to resurrect him."

Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"Was he (man) not a discharge of semen after which he developed into a clot of blood and then Allāh created him and perfected him? Then Allāh made the couple male and female. Does He then not have the power to resurrect the dead?"* [*Surah 75, wrses 37-40*]

Allāh Ta'āla describes the male sperm as *"spurting water which emerges from between the backbone and the chest."* The Arabic word *"tarā'ib"* (translated above as *"chest")* actually refers to the sternum. Although a child is conceived when the male and female gametes meet, the verse uses the word *"water"* in the singular sense. The author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* mentions that the singular form is used because the verse refers to the zygote i.e. the cell formed after the union of the male and female gametes.

The Ahadīth mention that women also discharge a form of semen like men do. In fact, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that if the semen of the wife is more than that of the husband when they cohabit, the child will resemble the wife's family. On the contrary, when the husband's semen is more, the child will resemble his family. [*Muslim*]

Allāh Ta'āla says that the *"water" "emerges from between the backbone and the chest."* Physicians of the past maintained that the semen is produced from every part of the body and it is the corresponding part of the father and mother's body that leads to the formation of that part of the child's body (possibly an antiquated description of genes). If this is true, it will not contradict the verse because the wording of the verse does not restrict the source of semen to the backbone and chest. It may also be said that since the back represents one end of the body and the chest represents the other end of the body (at the front), the phrase *"between the backbone and the chest" refers to the entire body.*

(9) The day when secrets will be examined. (10) There shall then neither be any power nor assistant for man. (11) By the sky from which rain falls... (12) ...and by the earth which cleaves! (13) It is definitely a decisive speech... (14) ...and it is no joke. (15) They are certainly conniving a plot... (16) ...and I am also planning something. (17) Give the disbelievers respite. Grant them reprieve for a while.

In the foregoing verses, Allāh mentions that He is perfectly Capable of resurrecting man after his body has decomposed, just as He was Capable of creating him the first time from a drop of fluid. In the verses under discussion,

Allāh speaks about the Day of Judgment when man will be present before Allāh for reckoning. Allāh says, *"The day when secrets will be examined"* i.e. when the quality of all deeds will be examined. Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"The record of deeds shall be placed and you will see the sinners afraid of what is contained in them. They will say, 'Woe be to us! What is with this book that it does not leave anything small or large unrecorded?' They will find their deeds present."* [*Surah 18, verse 50*]

"There shall then neither be any power nor assistant for man:" Man will be totally helpless on the Day of Judgment and none will be able to help him. Allāh Ta'āla then takes two oaths to assert that the Qur'ān is true indeed and that it effectively differentiates between truth and falsehood. Allāh says, *"By the sky from which rain falls and by the earth which cleaves!" i.e. when a seed germinates, it cleaves the earth apart to sprout. Using these two oaths to strengthen the affirmation, Allāh declares, 'it (the Qur'ān) is definitely a decisive speech and it is no joke."*

Allāh continues, *"They (the disbelievers) are certainly conniving a plot"* to stifle the truth and to prevent others from accepting Islām. The polytheists continuously harassed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and prevented people from meeting the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling them that he was insane and that he was merely relating fanciful fables of the past. In addition to this, they also persecuted the Muslims. Allāh says, *"I am also planning something."* While the disbelievers are busily planning to destroy Islām, Allāh shall confound their plans.

Allāh then tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to grieve but to *"Give the disbelievers respite. Grant them reprieve for a while."* In these concluding verses, Allāh reassures the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he has nothing to worry about because Allāh shall soon deal with the polytheists. They will certainly be punished in the Hereafter. Of course, punishment in this world can never be ruled out. It then occurred that the polytheists were defeated in the Battle of Badr and many of their leaders were killed.

سورة الاعلى

Makkan	Surah A'la	Verses 19

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿﴾

سَبِّحِ ٱسْمَ رَبِّكَ ٱلْأَعْلَى ﴿1﴾ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴿2﴾ وَٱلَّذِى قَدَّرَ فَهَدَىٰ ﴿3﴾ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَخْرَجَ
ٱلْمَرْعَىٰ ﴿4﴾ فَجَعَلَهُۥ غُثَآءً أَحْوَىٰ ﴿5﴾ سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنسَىٰٓ ﴿6﴾ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ يَعْلَمُ
ٱلْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ ﴿7﴾ وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿8﴾ فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿9﴾ سَيَذَّكَّرُ مَن
يَخْشَىٰ ﴿10﴾ وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا ٱلْأَشْقَى ﴿11﴾ ٱلَّذِى يَصْلَى ٱلنَّارَ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰ ﴿12﴾ ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا
يَحْيَىٰ ﴿13﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿14﴾ وَذَكَرَ ٱسْمَ رَبِّهِۦ فَصَلَّىٰ ﴿15﴾ بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا
﴿16﴾ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿17﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَفِى ٱلصُّحُفِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿18﴾ صُحُفِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿19﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) Glorify the name of your Exalted Lord... (2) Who created and perfected... (3) .. Who determined and showed the way... (4) ...Who made fodder grow... (5) ... .and then reduced it to a black heap of debris. (6) We shall soon teach you and you will not forget... (7) .. except what Allāh wills. Verily Allāh knows what is apparent and what is hidden. (8) We shall soon make the easy Shari'ah simple for you. (9) So advise if advice is beneficial. (10) The one who fears will take heed... (11) .... whereas only he will keep away from it who is most unfortunate... (12)...and who shall enter the gigantic fire. (13) He will then neither die there nor live. (14) Successful indeed is he who has adopted purity... (15) ... who takes the name of his Lord and performs Salāh. (16) However, they prefer the life of this world... (17) . . . whereas the Hereafter is much better and much more lasting. (18) Undoubtedly, this is in the previous scriptures... (19). ...the scriptures of Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Mūsa عليه السلام.

Surah A'la begins by commanding man to glorify Allāh's name. Thereafter, the Surah mentions Allāh's excellent attributes. The first attribute mentioned is that Allāh is *"Al A'la" ("Exalted").* Abu Dawūd reports from Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه that when the verse, *"So glorify the name of your Majestic Lord"* was

revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the Muslims to include the verse in the Ruku. Therefore, the Tasbīh of Ruku is:

"Glory be to my Majestic Lord."

Thereafter, when the first verse of Surah A'la was revealed commanding, *"Glorify the name of your Exalted Lord"*, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the Muslims to include this in the Sajdah. Consequently, the Tasbīh of Sajdah is:

"Glory be to my Exalted Lord"

The Surah describes Allāh further when it states that it is Allāh *"Who created and perfected"* the creation. Furthermore, it is He *"Who determined"* the exact proportions and nature of every creature that He created. Thereafter, Allāh *"showed the way"* to His creation by causing them to be inclined towards the functions for which they were created. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* (*v. 4 p. 475*) has quoted several other interpretations of the verse *"Who determined and showed the way"*. These are:

- *Allāh has shown man the good fortune of virtue and the ill fortune of evil [Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه]*
- *Allāh has determined the sustenance of every person and showed him the way to earn this sustenance.*
- *Allāh has predetermined the benefits of everything and has taught man how to exploit these.*

The Surah describes Allāh further when it says that it is Allāh *"Who made fodder grow"*. Allāh grows the fodder which man feeds to his animals so that they may do the work required from them. After the animals have eaten their share of the fodder, the left-over crop becomes a pile of debris, which gradually turns black as it decomposes. Referring to this, the Surah says that after growing the fodder, Allāh *"then reduced it to a black heap of debris."*

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"We shall soon teach you (the Qur'ān) and you will not forget, except what Allāh wills.* "This verse repeats the message of verse 17 of Surah Qiyāmah (*Surah 75*) where Allāh says, *"Verily, it is Our responsibility to collect it (the Qur'ān) and to make you recite it."* While Allāh Ta'āla made the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remember all of the Qur'ān, there were certain verses which Allāh made the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forget because they had been abrogated. This was done by Allāh's command and is not without reason. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah (Surah 2, verse 106), *"Whenever We repeal any verse or cause it to be forgotten, We bring something better or equivalent to it. Do you not know that Allāh has power over all things?"* Refer to the commentary of this verse of Surah Baqarah for more details on the repealing of laws in the Shari'ah.

Allāh continues, *"Verily Allāh knows what is apparent and what is hidden."* Allāh knows the apparent and inner condition of every person. Nothing is hidden from Him.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, Allāh says, *"We shall*

soon make the easy Shari'ah simple for you. "In this verse, Allāh promises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his Shari'ah shall be easy to practise. No injunction of the Shari'ah is beyond man's capability and no injunction will cause excessive difficulty to a person. If an ill person cannot stand and perform Sulāh, he is allowed to sit and perform the Ruku (*genuflexion*) and Sajdah (*prostration*). If he cannot do this, he may sit and perform the Ruku (*genuflexion*) and Sajdah (*prostration*) by merely lowering his head. If this is also not possible, he may perform the entire Salāh while lying down.

Zakāh is due only from the person who possesses money equivalent to Nisāb (*what is fixed*). When Zakāh does become obligatory for one, it is only 2.5% of one's total wealth that is given (97.5% remains with him). Then too, Zakāh will be paid only for certain commodities and not for all one's wealth e.g. one's necessities will not be added to the total amount when calculating Zakāh. Similarly, Hajj is also not obligatory on every Muslim until one is able to afford it.

As far as the fasts of Ramadhān are concerned, a person who is ill, travelling, expecting or breast-feeding may omit them and make them up when she/he is well. Among the concessions that the Shari'ah has allowed is that travellers should perform only two Rakāhs Obligatory Salāh instead of four. Besides the above, there are numerous other concessions that the Shari'ah allows in various circumstances. The details of these can be found in the books of Islamic jurisprudence.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" quotes certain commentators who translate the Arabic word *'yusra"* (translated above as *"easy Shari'ah"*) as "revelation". According to this interpretation, the verse reads, *"We shall make revelation easy for you (so that you may remember and teach it)."*

"So advise if advice is beneficial." This verse seems to indicate that advice should be given only when one deems it to be beneficial. However, the author of *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that the verse contains a figure of expression by which only one aspect of something is mentioned and considered sufficient when the opposite also applies. This means that advice should be given whether one thinks it will benefit the other person or not. This is similar to a verse of Surah Nahl where Allāh states that He has *"made coats for you that protect you from the heat"*. Although not stated, this verse also implies *"coats that protect you from the cold."*

"The one who fears will take heed whereas only he will keep away from it (from the advice) who is most unfortunate and who shall enter the gigantic fire." The fire of Hell is described as a *"gigantic fire"* because it is seventy times more intense than the fire of this world. Describing the plight of the person who is to enter Hell, Allāh says that *"He will then neither die there nor live."* None will die in Hell because the life of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is eternal. The life of the people in Hell cannot be described as life because of the misery they will suffer there. Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"The Fire of Hell will be for those who disbelieve, where no decree will be passed against them so that they may die. Their punishment will also not be lightened. Thus do We punish every disbeliever."* [*Surah 34, verse 35*]

The above verses make it clear that only the person who fears Allāh will

accept good advice that he is given concerning his spiritual well-being. Such people realise that disobedience to Allāh will bring them devastation in the Hereafter. On the other hand, the disbelievers pay no heed to the advice given to them and will meet the terrible consequences.

"Successful indeed is he who has adopted purity, who takes the name of his Lord and performs Salāh." Adopting *'purity"* means that one should be free from any beliefs of infidelity and Bid'ah (*innovations*). It also entails purifying oneself from evil character and evil deeds. The Arabic word *"tazakkā"* denotes exerting oneself in attaining purity. This means that whether one's Nafs (*carnal self*) is obliging or not, one should still persevere in purifying oneself from evil. The greatest manner of purifying oneself is by being particular about one's Salāh because Salāh prevents one from evil. Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"Verily Salāh prevents obscenity and evil."* [*Surah 29, verse 45*]

Allāh therefore encourages man to purify himself from all sins, including Disbelief and polytheism so that he may be successful. Allāh then mentions the reason for man's failure to succeed in the Hereafter. The reason is that *"they prefer the life of this world whereas the Hereafter is much better and much more lasting."* Although many people realise the truth of Islām, they remain ensnared in the darkness of disbelief and polytheism because they fear a loss in their wealth or positions if they accept Islām. Let alone the optional acts of Ibādah, there are many Muslims who neglect even their obligatory duties because of their preoccupation with worldly matters. The true believer should be particular of even the Sunan and Mustahabbāt because they elevate a person's status in the Hereafter just as the Farā'idh (*obligations*) and (*Wājib*) compulsory do. Fixing their sights on the temporary benefits of this world, people forsake the deeds of the Hereafter without realising that *"the Hereafter is much better and much more lasting."*

The superiority of the Hereafter over this world is evident from the fact that the reward of a single deed in the Hereafter is better than everything that this world contains. For example, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that a single morning or a single evening spent in Allāh's path is better than the world and whatever it contains. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned that the two Rakāhs of Sunnah Salāh performed before the Fajr Salāh is better than the world and whatever it contains.

One should bear in mind that earning a living to provide Halāl sustenance for oneself and one's family for Allāh's pleasure is not a mundane pursuit but it is regarded as an act of Ibādah (*worship*). One will be guilty of *"giving preference to the life of this world"* when one is totally negligent of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* and pays no attention to carrying out deeds that will benefit one there. Such a person lives and dies for this world and is immersed in sin. Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"The fact is that you love this world and you forsake the Hereafter."* Allāh says in Surah Dahar, *"Indeed these people love the world and leave behind them a weighty day."* [*Surah 76 verse 24*]

Allāh continues, *"Undoubtedly, this is in the previous scriptures; the scriptures of Ibrahīm* عليه السلام *and Mūsa* عليه السلام*." "Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports from Ibn Mardawiya رحمة الله عليه and Ibn Asākir رحمة الله عليه that Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه once asked

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether anything from the scriptures of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was revealed to him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied in the affirmative and then recited the verses: *"Successful indeed is he who has adopted purity, who takes the name of his Lord and performs Salāh. However, they prefer the life of this world whereas the Hereafter is much better and much more lasting."* Therefore, it is believed that the pronoun *"this"* in the verse *"Undoubtedly, this is in the previous scriptures"* refers to these verses specifically (*viz, verses 14-17 of this Surah*). However, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* makes it clear that the authenticity of this hadith cannot be verified.

Certain commentators state that the pronoun *"this"* refers to the entire Surah A'la while others maintain that it refers to the entire Qur'ān. Allāh knows best. Surah Najm (*Surah 53)* also alludes to the contents of the scriptures given to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. The subject matter begins with verses 36 and 37 of the Surah, where Allāh says, *"Has he not been informed of what appeared in the scriptures of Mūsa? And in the scriptures of Ibrahīm who fulfilled?"* Refer to the commentary of these verses for further details.

سورة الغاشية

Makkan	Surah Ghāshiya	Verses 26

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

هَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ ٱلْغَـٰشِيَةِ ﴿1﴾ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَـٰشِعَةٌ ﴿2﴾ عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ﴿3﴾ تَصْلَىٰ نَارًا حَامِيَةً ﴿4﴾ تُسْقَىٰ مِنْ عَيْنٍ ءَانِيَةٍ ﴿5﴾ لَّيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِن ضَرِيعٍ ﴿6﴾ لَّا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِى مِن جُوعٍ ﴿7﴾ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ ﴿8﴾ لِّسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ ﴿9﴾ فِى جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿10﴾ لَّا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَـٰغِيَةً ﴿11﴾ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ﴿12﴾ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ﴿13﴾ وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ ﴿14﴾ وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ﴿15﴾ وَزَرَابِىُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ﴿16﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Has the news of the overwhelming thing come to you? (2) Many faces on that day will be looking down. (3) (Among these shall be) he who suffered affliction and who endured many difficulties. (4) He shall enter the blazing fire... (5) ..where he will be given water to drink from boiling springs. (6) The only food for the people of Hell shall be thorny trees... (7) which will neither nourish nor alleviate hunger. (8) Many faces on that day will be resplendent. (9) They shall be pleased with their efforts... (10) ....in the lofty gardens of Heaven... (11) ...where they shall not hear futile talk. (12) In Heaven there are flowing springs. (13) In Heaven there are elevated thrones... (14) ...cups set in place... (15) ..... cushions arranged in rows... (16) .... and carpets spread out.

Among the many names with which the Qur'ān describes Judgment day, one is with the word *"Al Ghāshiya" ("an overwhelming thing")*. Judgment day is described as such because its hardship and severity will overwhelm every person and cause people's hearts to flutter with fear. Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Has the news of the overwhelming thing come to you?"* Many commentators have interpreted the verse to mean: *"The news of the overwhelming thing has certainly come to you."* Although this is the ultimate meaning of the verse, it has been phrased as a question to attract the reader's attention.

Allāh then continues to describe the Day of Judgment when He says, *"Many faces on that day will be looking down."* When these people are told to submit to

Allāh in this world and to humble themselves before Allāh's creation, they behave haughtily and refuse to do so. They will therefore be made to suffer disgrace on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says about them in Surah Qalam, *"Their gazes will be cast down and disgrace shall overcome them. Indeed they used to be summoned to prostrate when they were hale and healthy."* [*Surah 68, verse 43*]

Allāh continues to say that among those to cast their gazes down in disgrace will be *"He who suffered affliction and who endured many difficulties." "Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه that the affliction and difficulty that a doomed person will suffer on the Day of Judgment will be that he will be fettered with chains and a yoke. He will have to drag these along with him as he is made to climb the mountains of Hell.

Sayyidina Ikrima رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the verse refers to people who endure many difficulties in this world and who also exert themselves in spiritual exercises. However, because they refuse to accept Islām, all their efforts are wasted and they will be subjected to punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

Concerning such a person, Allāh says, *"He shall enter the blazing fire where he will be given water to drink from boiling springs."* The Arabic word *"hāmiya"* (translated above as *"blazing")* actually refers to fire that is so hot that it cannot be heated any further. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told His companions *(Sahabah)* رضى الله عنهم that the fire of this world is merely a seventieth part of the fire of Hell. The Sahabah رضى الله عنه said in astonishment, *"But this fire is more than enough (to burn)!"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Then too, the fire of Hell will be 69 grades more intense."*

In addition to this, the people in Hell will be given boiling water to drink. Allāh says in Surah Rahmān, *"They shall pass between it (Hell) and the boiling water."* Allāh says in Surah Kahf [*Surah 18, verse 29*], *"If they beseech help, they will be helped with water that is like the residue of burnt oil and will scorch their faces. A terrible drink indeed!"* Allāh speaks about it in Surah Muhammad as: *"Can these people ever be like those who will abide forever in the Fire and are given boiling water to drink, which tears their innards to shreds?"* [*Surah 47, verse 15*]

After describing the drink of the people in Hell, Allāh describes their food when He says, *"The only food for the people of Hell shall be thorny trees."* The author of *"Mirqāt"* writes that *"Darī"* (translated above as *"thorny trees")* is actually the name of a thorny tree found in the Hijāz area. It is so foul and poisonous that even animals stay far from it. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that *"Darī"* is something in Hell which is more bitter than aloes, more foul-smelling than a carcass and hotter than fire. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Describing the *"Darī"*, Allāh says that it *"will neither nourish nor alleviate hunger."* Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the hunger that the people of Hell will suffer will be so extreme that it will equal the other forms of punishment in Hell. When they will plead for food, they will be given Darī to eat, which will neither provide nutrition nor satisfy their hunger. When they plead for food a second time, they will be given *'food that gets stuck in the throat"*. In an effort to get the food down their throats, they will recall that in this world they used to drink something in such a

situation. They will then plead for something to drink. Boiling water will be given to them suspended on iron hooks. The water will be so hot that when it is brought close to their faces, their faces will be scalded. When they drink it, it will tear their innards to bits. [*"Mishkāt" p. 504*]

After describing the punishment of the disbelievers, Allāh speaks about the bounties that the believers will enjoy in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Many faces on that day will be resplendent."* Because these people obeyed Allāh in this world, they will be exuberant on the Day of Judgment. Allāh describes them in Surah Mutaffifin with the words: *"You will recognise the resplendence of bounties on their faces."* [*Surah 83, verse 24*]

These fortunate believers *'shall be pleased with their efforts'*. They will be pleased with the good deeds they exerted themselves to do in the world because they will see the fruits in the Hereafter. They will be enjoying themselves *"in the lofty gardens of Heaven where they shall not hear futile talk."* Heaven shall have nothing unpleasant. Neither will one see anything unpleasant, nor hear anything unpleasant. There will be no noise and shouting in Heaven, nor any talk that is futile or sinful. Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"They will not hear any noise there nor any foolish talk. Instead they will hear the resonant call of 'Peace 'Peace'."* [*Surah 56, verses 25,26*]

Describing Heaven further, Allāh says, *"In Heaven there are flowing springs. "Besides drinking the pure waters of these springs, the people of Heaven will also enjoy looking at them and hearing them. Details of the springs of Heaven have been discussed in Surah Dahar* [*Surah 76, verses 6 & 18*] *and Surah Mutaffifin* [*Surah 83, verses 27,28*].

Allāh continues, *"In Heaven there are elevated thrones, cups set in place, cushions arranged in rows and carpets spread out."* Surah Wāqi'ah [*Surah 56, verses 18 & 34*] discusses the cups and thrones of Heaven while Surah Dahar mentions, *"Utensils of silver will be brought to them as well as glasses of crystal, such crystal that is of silver, which those filling will fill by an appropriate measure."* [*Surah 76, verses 15,16*]

أَفَلَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَى ٱلْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ﴿١٨﴾ وَإِلَى ٱلْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿٢٠﴾

(17) Have they not looked at the camel and seen how it was created? (18) And at the sky, how it was raised? (19) And at the mountains, how they were placed firmly? (20) And at the earth, how it was spread out?

Because the disbelievers were astonished to hear about the magnificent bounties of Heaven, Allāh Ta'āla encourages them to think about certain natural phenomena which make Allāh's might manifest. Allāh Ta'āla encourages man to ponder about four things. Allāh asks, *"Have they not looked at the camel and seen how it was created?"* The Arabs were used to camels and used them daily. They used camels in their fields, for transport and for domestic purposes.

Camels are extremely robust and durable animals. They can subsist on a diet of thorny trees and can carry large loads. Camels can survive for up to a week without water and are so obedient that even a little child can lead them

along anywhere. Allāh has also created camels in an extremely unique manner so that they are perfectly adapted to survive the hazards of the harsh desert climate. Although the elephant is a much larger animal than the camel, Allāh has mentioned the camel instead of the elephant because the first addressees of the Qur'ān (the Arabs) knew camels and scarcely saw an elephant. Camels were also very valuable to them.

Allāh then speaks about some of His other creations when He asks whether have not looked *"at the sky, (and seen) how it was raised? And at the mountains, how they were placed firmly? And at the earth, how it was spread out?"* All these splendid creations of Allāh are in front of man and they indicate Allāh's tremendous power. By studying these, man can realise Allāh's great power and will know that Allāh is perfectly Capable of creating the bounties of Heaven that have been mentioned.

The author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* writes that Allāh has specifically mentioned the above four phenomena because the Arabs were often travelling through the desert. In such a situation, all they saw were the camels they travelled on, the sky above them, the mountains around them and the earth beneath them.

(21) So give advice, for you are an advisor. (22) You have not been appointed as a warder over them. (23) However, the one who turns away and disbelieves... (24) ... .Allāh shall punish him most severely. (25) Verily they shall return to us. (26) Thereafter, it is Our responsibility to take their reckoning.

Allāh reminds man about the advent of Judgment Day and warns the disbelievers of a dreadful punishment. Whoever does not believe will have to face the consequences of his deeds and no blame may be pinned on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, because of his overwhelming concern for his Ummah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to become extremely grieved when people refused to accept Islām. Therefore, Allāh said to him, *"So give advice, for you are an advisor. You have not been appointed as a warder over them"* i.e. your responsibility is only to preach the message and not to force people to believe. Whoever believed after the message reached him, shall be successful. *"However, the one who turns away and disbelieves, Allāh shall punish him most severely."* He will be unable to escape Allāh's punishment.

Allāh concludes the Surah by reminding man of his ultimate end when He says, *"Verily they shall return to us. Thereafter, it is Our responsibility to take their reckoning."*

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سورة الفجر

Makkan	Surah Fajr	Verses 30

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالْفَجْرِ (1) وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ (2) وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ (3) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ (4) هَلْ فِي ذَٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ (5) أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ (6) إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ (7) الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ (8) وَثَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ (9) وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ (10) الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ (11) فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ (12) فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ (13) إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ (14)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the dawn! (2) By the ten nights! (3) By the even and the odd! (4) By the night when it departs! (5) Is there not an oath in this for the intelligent? (6) Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the Ād... (7) . . .the people of Iram, who were people of pillars? (8) The likes of them were not created in the lands. (9)(Have you not also seen how your Lord dealt) with the Thamūd who used to carve the rocks of the valley? (10) And (have you not also seen how your Lord dealt) with Phara'oh (Fir'oun), the man of stakes? (11) These people transgressed in the lands... (12) ... and caused tremendous anarchy. (13) So your Lord rained the whip of punishment on them. (14) Verily your Lord is Ever Vigilant.

These opening verses of Surah Fajr recount the incidents of certain nations of the past that were destroyed when they refused to believe in Allāh and His Prophets عليهم السلام. These are mentioned so that people learn lessons from them. As in many other Surahs, Allāh emphasises the subject matter by taking a few oaths. Allāh asserts, *"By the dawn!"* Allāh takes a similar oath in Surah Takwīr where He says, *"by the morning when it takes a breath."* [*Surah 81, verse 18*]

Allāh continues, *"By the ten nights!"* Here Allāh refers to the first ten nights of Dhul Hijjah, as substantiated by a Hadith that Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubayr رضى الله عنه have also forwarded this interpretation.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Good deeds are more beloved to Allāh during the ten days of Dhul Hijjah than during any other time."* Surprised, the prophet's companions (*Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Are the deeds of these days even better than Jihād during any other time? "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Yes, they are even better than Jihād, unless a person goes out in Jihād and sacrfices his life and wealth against the enemy without returning with anything." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 132*]

Allāh says further, *"By the even and the odd!"* Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Imrān bin Husain رضى الله عنه that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked about the meaning of *"the even and the odd"*, he replied that they refer to Salāh. While the number of Rakāhs of some Salāhs is even (two or four), others are odd viz, one Rakāh of Witr and three Rakāhs of Maghrib. However, this narration is not absolutely authentic because one of the narrators is unknown.

Commentators have mentioned that *"even"* refers to everything created in pairs while *"odd"* refers to everything that is not paired. *"Durrul Manthūr"* reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that *"odd"* refers to Allāh Who is One and *"even"* refers to everything else. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that Allāh has created everything in pairs. With the earth, Allāh has created the sky; with land, the oceans; with man, Jinn; with male, female; with the sun, the moon; etc. Only Allāh is One without a partner.

Allāh continues, *"By the night when it departs!"* This oath is similar to that on Surah Takwīr where Allāh says, *"And (I swear by) the night when it departs!"* [*Surah 81, verse 17*]

After taking these oaths, Allāh says, *"Is there not an oath in this for the intelligent?"* i.e. are these oaths not sufficient for the intelligent? These oaths are taken to strengthen an assertion that is implied though not stated. The assertion is: *"Those who adamantly reject the message of Islām are inviting Allāh 's punishment to themselves and will be destroyed just as the people of previous nations were destroyed when they rejected the message of their Anbiya (Prophets) عليهم السلام."*

Addressing every reader of the Qur'ān, Allāh says, *"Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the Ād, the people (descendants) of(a man named) Iram, who were people (who had the stature) of pillars?"* Some commentators state that the Ād are called *"people of pillars"* because they would travel outdoors with their tents and pitch these by tying them to pillars wherever they found greenery. They would return to their homes only once the greenery disappeared. "Ruhul Ma'āni" states that Iram was the son of Sām, the son of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Sām had two grandsons, Ibn Āsi and Ād, the progeny of whom were the nation of Ād.

Allāh says about the Ād, *"The likes of them were not created in the lands."* Allāh gave the Ād such strength that He had not given to any other nation. In fact, they were so powerful that they became proud and used to say, *"Who can be more powerful than us?"* However, Allāh soon punished them with a windstorm that lasted seven nights and eight days.

The story of the Ād has already recounted in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 65-72*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 50-60*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 123-140*], Surah

HāMīm Sajdah [*Surah 41, verses 13-16*], Surah Qamar [*Surah 54, verses 18-22*] and Surah Hāqqah [*Surah 69, verses 6-8*].

Allāh continues, *"(Have you not also seen how your Lord dealt) with the Thamūd who used to carve the rocks of the valley (of Qura)?"* The Thamūd lived somewhere between Hijāz and Shām and their settlement is referred to as Wadi Qura (The Valley of Qura) or Hijr. Allāh Ta'āla sent Sayyidah Sālih عليه السلام as a Nabi (*prophet*) to them. Allāh says about them in Surah Hijr, *"The people of Hijr denied the messengers. Our signs came to them, yet they ignored these. They used to carve homes out of the mountains, living in great peace. A scream seized them during the morning and whatever they earned was of no avail to them."* [*Surah 15, verses 80-84*]

The details of the Thamūd are discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 73-79*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 6 1-68*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 14 1-159*], Surah Naml [*Surah 27, verses 45-53*], Surah HāMīm Sajdah [*Surah 41, verses 17-18*], Surah Qamar [*Surah 54, verses 23-32*] and Surah Hāqqah [*Surah 69, verses 4-5*].

The homes they carved from the mountains are still visible today. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and His Companions (*the Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم passed by these ruins, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم covered his head and hurried his camel. He instructed His Companions (*the Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم to weep as they passed so that it should never happen that they are afflicted by the same punishment.

Allāh continues, *"And (have you not also seen how your Lord dealt) with Phara'oh (Fir'oun), the man of stakes?"* Phara'oh (*Fir'oun*) and his army were destroyed by Allāh's punishment just as the Ād and Thamūd were destroyed, although in a different manner. Commentators state that phara'oh (*Fir'oun*) was called *"the man of stakes"* because he used to hammer four stakes into the ground and tie people to these so that they could be tortured. Others state that he used to hammer stakes into their hands and feet as they lay on the ground. Yet another group of commentators state that the title refers to his large army. Wherever his army camped, many tents had to be erected, all needing stakes to support them. Because of the large number of stakes used, his army is referred to as *'stakes"*. An explanation of this has been given in the commentary of verse 12 of Surah Sād (*Surah 38*).

"These people [the Ād, Thamūd and phara'oh (Fir'oun)] transgressed in the lands and caused tremendous anarchy." They disobeyed the Prophets عليهم السلام, adamantly clung to disbelief and polytheism and oppressed others. As a result, *"your Lord rained the whip of punishment on them."* This verse tells us that the punishment that these nations received was similar to the situation when someone inflicts a series of lashes across the back of a criminal. Just as the lashes are continuous, the series of punishments also came to them continuously. Eventually, they were annihilated.

"Verily your Lord is Ever Vigilant." No deed of a person escapes Allāh's knowledge. No person should think that he is exempt from punishment because he can be afflicted by the same punishment that destroyed the former nations. One may visualise the disbeliever/sinner as a criminal on the run. Just as the police commission an extremely vigilant squad to lie in wait on a road that the criminal has to pass, Allāh is waiting for the disbeliever/sinner to pass the road

of this world leading to the Hereafter. It is only a matter of time before he is caught and taken to task.

فَأَمَّا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِذَا مَا ٱبْتَلَىٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَأَكْرَمَهُۥ وَنَعَّمَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّىٓ أَكْرَمَنِ ﴿15﴾ وَأَمَّآ إِذَا مَا
ٱبْتَلَىٰهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّىٓ أَهَٰنَنِ ﴿16﴾

(15) As for man, when his Lord tries him by granting him honour and favours, he says, "My Lord has honoured me. (16) However, when He tries him by constraining his sustenance, he says, "My Lord has disgraced me!"

These two verses speak about how Allāh tests man in this world. These verses also reveal the psychology of man. Allāh sometimes tests man by granting him abundant wealth and sometimes Allāh tests him by reducing his wealth. When blessed with plenty of wealth, man ought to express his gratitude to Allāh by spending the wealth as Allāh wants him to. On the other hand, when Allāh tests people with poverty, they ought to exercise patience and continue obeying Allāh's commands without complaining. Unfortunately, most people succumb to their baser instincts and, when tested with abundant wealth, they become proud and haughty because they think that their wealth is a personal achievement. They fail to realise that their wealth is a test for them from Allāh. Most of those tested with poverty also fail the test when they complain and flout Allāh's commands in a desperate effort earn something.

One should bear in mind that being wealthy does not necessarily mean that one is enjoying a favourable status with Allāh. By the same token, being poor does not mean that Allāh dislikes one. It is for this reason that there are rich and poor disbelievers just as there are rich and poor Muslims.

Commentators mention that these two verses are linked to the previous verses to indicate that instead of learning lessons from the destruction of the previous nations and repenting, man's ungrateful nature prevents him from doing this. Therefore, instead of reforming, he becomes worse.

كَلَّا بَل لَّا تُكْرِمُونَ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿17﴾ وَلَا تَحَٰٓضُّونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿18﴾
وَتَأْكُلُونَ ٱلتُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا ﴿19﴾ وَتُحِبُّونَ ٱلْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ﴿20﴾

(17) Never! Instead, you do not honour the orphan... (18) do not encourage feeding of the poor... (19) ... devour inheritance with relish... (20) ... and love wealth with a very deep love.

Allāh asserts, *"Never!"* i.e. man's ides are correct. Wealth does not indicate acceptance in Allāh's sight and poverty does not indicate rejection. Allāh then describes man's love for wealth when He says, *"Instead, you do not honour the orphan, do not encourage feeding of the poor, devour inheritance with relish, and love wealth with a very deep love."* Besides not assisting the needy, some people do not even encourage others to do the same. When someone passes away, they devour

the shares that belong to others regardless of whether the shares belong to orphans, widows or people who are absent.

Allāh condemns the deep love that people have for wealth because such love makes people forget the rights they owe to others and it also makes them neglect the duties they owe to Allāh. When earning their wealth, people with a deep love for wealth show no regard for Halāl (*lawful*) and Harām (*unlawful*) and forget about the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Love for wealth leads people to commit sins and also makes them miserly. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"This world is home to the person who has no home, wealth for the one who has no wealth and only the person without intelligence accumulates it."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 444*]

There is no need to amass excessive wealth because one will have to leave it all behind when one dies. One should earn what is necessary and spend in charity what is extra. Sayyidina Mahmūd bin Labīd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Man dislikes two things. He dislikes death whereas death is best for a Mu'min so that he may be safeguarded from trials. He also dislikes a shortage of wealth whereas this will ensure less reckoning."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 448*]

كَلَّآ إِذَا دُكَّتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ﴿٢١﴾ وَجَآءَ رَبُّكَ وَٱلْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَجِاْىٓءَ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بِجَهَنَّمَ ۚ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾ يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِى ﴿٢٤﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُۥٓ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُۥٓ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ يَٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفْسُ ٱلْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ٱرْجِعِىٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾ فَٱدْخُلِى فِى عِبَٰدِى ﴿٢٩﴾ وَٱدْخُلِى جَنَّتِى ﴿٣٠﴾

(21) Never! When the earth shall be ripped to shreds... (22) ... when your Lord shall commence proceedings with the angels in rows... (23) .... and when Hell will be brought to the fore, on that day man will understand But of what use will this understanding be? (24) He will say, "Oh dear! If only I had sent deeds ahead for my life!" (25) So on that day, none shall punish like Allāh's punishment... (26) . . . and none shall fasten like Allāh fastens. (27) "O contented soul!" (28) Return happily to your Lord while He is pleased with you." (29) "Enter among My bondsmen... (30) . . .and enter My Heaven."

Allāh stresses, *"Never!"* i.e. never think that devouring inheritance and having a profound love for wealth will benefit one. Rather, these traits will hurl one to destruction and one will have to account for them. Allāh then describes the scene of the Day of Judgment when He says, *"When the earth shall be ripped to shreds (and nothing will be left standing on its surface), when your Lord (i.e. His judgement) shall commence proceedings with the angels in rows and when Hell will be brought to the fore, on that day man will understand. But of what use will this understanding be?"* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the Day of Judgment, Hell will be brought with seventy thousand bridles restraining it. There shall be seventy thousand

angels pulling each bridle.

When man will realise the error of his ways in the Hereafter, it will be too late because this understanding has to be realised in this world. This world is the place where Belief and good deeds will profit one. The Hereafter is the place only for reckoning and retribution. Taubah (*repantance*) will not be accepted there. When a person will face the devastation in the hereafter, he will lament, *"Oh dear! If only I had sent deeds ahead for my life!"* He will then realise that he ought to have carried out good deeds and refrained from sin in this world to be saved from punishment in the Hereafter. He will refer to the life of the Hereafter as *"my life"* because it is an eternal life. Because of its transient nature, one can hardly refer to the life of this world as "my life".

Allāh continues, *"So on that day, none shall punish like Allāh's punishment and none shall fasten like Allāh fastens."* Before the Day of Judgment, none shall have experienced such severe punishment or such rigorous imprisonment. Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"We will place yokes upon the necks of the disbelievers."* A verse of Surah Mu'min reads: *"They shall soon come to know when yokes will be placed around their necks, as well as chains."*

Allāh will give glad tidings to the pious believers saying, *"O contented soul! Return happily to (the bounties of) your Lord while He is pleased with you."* Not only will the pious soul be happy with what it will receive, it will enjoy the ultimate pleasure of knowing that Allāh is pleased with it. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه states that Allāh will address the soul with these words when the person passes away and again on the Day of Judgment.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when the angel of death comes to take the soul of a pious believer, he addresses it thus, *"O pure soul that is in a pure body! Rejoice with Allāh 's bounty and sustenance and rejoice with the knowledge that your Lord is not angry with you."*

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught the following du'ā (*supplication*) to someone:

O Allāh! I implore You for a contented soul that is convinced about meeting You, is pleased with 'Your decision and content with what You give."

This supplication describes a few qualities of the *"contented soul"*. These are:

1. 'The soul is convinced that it will meet Allāh. When one has this conviction, one will ensure that one carries out every deed properly. In this manner, one will be composed whenever one engages in any act of Ibādah (worship).

2. 'The soul is also pleased with whatever Allāh decides in or against its favour. 'This is another great source of contentment.

3. The soul is content with whatever Allāh gives one. One is

then not greedy for what one does not have, one does not commit sins when earning wealth and does not neglect the duties one owes to Allāh when earning. With these traits, one will be able to refrain from all types of sin.

Addressing the *"contented soul"* further Allāh will say, *"Enter among My bondsmen and enter My Heaven."* Man is a social creature and cannot bear solitude. Allāh will therefore allow him to be among others in Heaven. In Heaven, he will be able to meet others like him and live peacefully there. Concerning the people of Heaven, Allāh says in Surah Hijr, *"We shall remove any animosity that may be in their breasts. As brothers they will be seated on couches, facing each other."* [*Surah 15, verse 47*]

Allāh says in Surah Tūr [*Surah 52, verse 23*], *"There they will pass around a cup in which there is no absurd talk and no sin."* They will pass a cup of drink around for enjoyment not because of any shortage. There will be no malice or rancour in their hearts, which will be filled with love and compassion for each other. Their enjoyment will be complete without fearing any ill-feelings from another person.

Makkan	Surah Balad	Verses 20

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) I swear by this city... (2) ...and you shall be free (of restrictions) in this city. (3) (I swear) by the father and offspring! (4.) We have certainly created man in toil. (5) Does man think that none shall ever have power over him? (6) He says, "I have wasted wealth in abundance." (7) Does he think that none sees him? (8) Have We not given him two eyes... (9) .... a tongue, two lips... (10) ...and showed him the two paths?

Allāh Ta'āla swears oaths by the city of Makkah and *"by the father [Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام] and (his) offspring (mankind)!"* These oaths are taken to emphasise that *"We have certainly created man in toil."* When this Surah was revealed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was still living in Makkah. At that time, he was still suffering the persecution of the polytheists.

Even the polytheists regarded Makkah to be a sacred place in which no fighting and killing should take place. By taking an oath by Makkah, Allāh honours its sanctity. Between the two oaths, Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"and you shall be free (of restrictions) in this city (Makkah)."* This verse foretold that a time will come when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would enter Makkah as a conqueror and that Allāh would free him from the restrictions of the city by permitting him to execute certain people. Consequently, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم marched with His Companions (*the Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم into Makkah during the 8th year after Hijrah, amnesty was granted to a large number of polytheists who had perpetrated atrocities against the Muslims. However, there were some people whom the prophet's companions (*Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم were commanded to execute. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said,

"Verily, Allāh made Makkah a Haram (sacred, i.e. a place where no killing should take place) the day He created the heavens and the earth. None was given freedom (to execute) before me and none shall ever have this freedom after me. This freedom was granted to me for only a portion of the day. It will now remain sacred by the decree of Allāh until Judgment Day i.e. killing will not be permitted in Makkah until Judgment Day." [*"Mishkāt" p. 237*]

Allāh says, *"We have certainly created man in toil."* Man is the best of Allāh's creation. Together with granting him honour, Allāh also tests man with many trials and hardships. Together with tending to his many needs and necessities, man faces many other difficulties in his life. Man has to ensure that he makes an effort to feed and clothe himself and his family. In addition to this, illnesses and calamities afflict him. Despite this, he has to continue earning a living and tending to his many responsibilities.

To feed himself, man has to till the land, plant the seeds and still ensure that the fields receive sufficient water and care. After caring for his crops and guarding them against pest hence, the crops are finally ready for harvesting. However, man's work does not end here. He still has to harvest the crop, thresh it (if it is a grain), store it and grind it into flour. Thereafter the flour has to be prepared and baked into bread before he can eat it. After eating the food, the waste has to be excreted. If he is suffering from constipation, he will have to seek medical assistance so that his stomach works. On the other hand, if he is suffering from diarrhoea, he will also need to have it treated.

If a person does not marry, he will have difficulty. If he does marry, he will have to exert himself to provide for his wife and children. He will have to worry about raising the children properly and he will have to share all their pains and experiences. The above are just as few of the myriad of difficulties that a person faces in his life. If one ponders about it, one will be able to enumerate many more. Besides these difficulties, there are numerous tasks that the Shari'ah demands from a person. One has to forsake one's sleep and occupation for Salāh, endure hunger and thirst to fast, give a portion of one's wealth in Zakāh and spend one's wealth to perform Hajj. These are responsibilities that man is entrusted with and from which the other creation are exempt.

If one fulfils all these responsibilities and endures all the difficulties of life to please Allāh, one will be greatly rewarded in the Hereafter. However, the person who does all of this for worldly motives will have no share of rewards in the Hereafter. In addition to this, if one commits sins, one will have to face punishment there.

When afflicted with difficulties, man's attitude should be that everything is from Allāh. He should continue being obedient to Allāh and he should turn to Allāh all the time. This is accomplished by making supplication to Allāh and engaging in acts of Ibādah (*worship*). However, the opposite usually takes place. Instead of turning to Allāh, people violate His commands and seem to have no fear of reckoning. Referring to this attitude, Allāh asks, *"Does man think that none shall ever have power over him?"* Man appears to think that he is free to do as he pleases without fearing that he is being watched and that Allāh has the power to take him to task for his deeds. He fails to realise that Allāh gave him the power

he wields and that Allāh has power over everything.

In this manner, man becomes haughty and extravagant and even has the audacity to boast, *"I have wasted wealth in abundance."* He does not realise that he spent his wealth in avenues that are displeasing to Allāh. It appears as if he thinks that none is watching him. Therefore, Allāh asks, *"Does he think that none sees him?"* Allāh is watching man all the time. The Tafsīr *"Jalālayn"* reveals that one of the disbelievers spent a great amount of wealth to oppose Islām and boasted about this saying, *"I have wasted wealth in abundance."* Allāh warns such people that He is ever Watchful over them and He will take them to task for the wrong they do.

Allāh continues, *"Have We not given him two eyes, a tongue, two lips and showed him the two paths (of good and evil,)?"* Allāh has given man his limbs and other physical qualities, all of which are invaluable aids for him and they also add to his beauty. Man ought to express gratitude for all of this by using these limbs to carry out deeds pleasing to Allāh. In this manner, he will be securing his success in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).* Allāh has shown man the way to attain salvation as well as the path to destruction. The choice is man's. The intelligent man will opt for the path of salvation by fulfilling Allāh's commands and the teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام. He will accept Allāh's authority, invest all he has for the Hereafter and ensure that he treats Allāh's creation well.

فَلَا ٱقْتَحَمَ ٱلْعَقَبَةَ (11) وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْعَقَبَةُ (12) فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ (13) أَوْ إِطْعَـٰمٌ فِى يَوْمٍ ذِى
مَسْغَبَةٍ (14) يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ (15) أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ (16) ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلْمَرْحَمَةِ (17) أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ (18) وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا هُمْ
أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ (19) عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّؤْصَدَةٌۢ (20)

(11) For what reason does man not emerge from the abyss? (12) What will inform you what (emerging from) the abyss entails? (13) It is the emancipation of slaves... (14) ...or, on a day of hunger, feeding... (15) ..... an orphaned relative... (16) ......or a dust-covered destitute. (17) Man will then become of those who believe, those who enjoin each other to be patient and those who enjoin each other to be compassionate. (18) These are the people of the right. (19) Those who reject Our verses are certainly the people of the left. (20) The Fire will be shut over them.

A believer has many responsibilities. While some of these are voluntary, others are obligatory. Referring to these, Allāh asks, *"For what reason does man not emerge from the abyss?" i.e.* why does man not spend his wealth to emerge from the abyss in which he is constantly fighting his Nafs (*carnalself*) and satan. This unending struggle of man in which he strives to fulfil Allāh's commands is compared to a deep abyss from which one struggles to emerge. Allāh then asks,

"What will inform you (O listener) what (emerging from) the abyss entails?" Allāh Ta'āla then presents three examples of deeds that will remove him from the

abyss so that he can win the battle against his Nafs and Satan.

The first is *"the emancipation of slaves"*. This entails setting slaves free irrespective of whether the act is done voluntarily or because one is compelled to as in the case of Kaffāra (*expiation*). Also included in the ambit of freeing slaves are *"Kitābah"* and *"Tadbīr"*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that when a person frees a slave, every limb of the person that corresponds with a limb of the slave will be freed from the fire of Hell.

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضى الله عنه reports that a villager once came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and asked what deed could admit him into Heaven. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Free a soul and emancipate a slave." "But are the two not the same thing?"* enquired the man. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"No Freeing a soul means that you free a slave all by yourself and emancipating a slave means that you assist in paying his price (e.g. helping a Mukātab slave pay his price for freedom). Also among the deeds that will admit you into Heaven is that you give someone an animal that gives a lot of milk or that you behave politely with a cruel relative. If you cannot do this, then feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, enjoin good and prevent evil. If you cannot do this even, then use your tongue for nothing except good words."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 294*]

The second and third deeds to remove one from the *"abyss"* in *"on a day of hunger, feeding an orphaned relative"* and feeding *"a dust-covered destitute"*. The destitute person referred to in the verse is someone who has absolutely nothing and has to sleep on the bare ground, causing his body to be covered in dust.

Allāh states further that when man will do this, *"Man will then become of those who believe, those who enjoin each other to be patient and those who enjoin each other to be compassionate."* Imān (belief) is the most important deed because no good deed is accepted without it. Allāh adds that enjoining each other to be patient is an essential trait of belief. The word *"sabr"* (translated above as *"patience"*) refers to remaining steadfast in performing good deeds, refraining from sin as well as exercising patience when afflicted with any difficulty. As explained in other verses (*such as verse 153 of Surah Baqarah*), the word *"sabr"* entails all these three meanings. Another requirement of belief is that a person encourages others to show compassion towards the rest of creation.

About such people Allāh declares, *"These are the people of the right"* i.e. the people who will receive their record of deeds in their right hands and who are promised Heaven. (Verses 27 to 38 of Surah Wāqi'ah (*Surah 56*) detail the bounties that *"the people of the right"* will receive in Heaven). On the other hand, *"Those who reject Our verses are certainly the people of the left. The Fire will be shut over them."* These people will receive their records of deeds in their left hands and will be doomed to Hell. When entered into Hell, the doors of Hell will be shut and they will be unable to escape. (*Verses 41 to 56 of Surah Wāqi'ah describe "the people of the left"*).

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سورة الشمس

Makkan	Surah Shams	Verses 15

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا ﴿1﴾ وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا ﴿2﴾ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا ﴿3﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ﴿4﴾ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا ﴿5﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا ﴿6﴾ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ﴿7﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ﴿8﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ﴿9﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ﴿10﴾ كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا ﴿11﴾ إِذِ انْبَعَثَ أَشْقَاهَا ﴿12﴾ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا ﴿13﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِذَنْبِهِمْ فَسَوَّاهَا ﴿14﴾ وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَاهَا ﴿15﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the sun and its light! (2) By the moon when it follows the sun! (3) By the day when it illuminates it! (4) By the night when it conceals the sun! (5) By the sky and the One Who created it! (6) By the earth and the One Who spread it out! (7) By the soul and the One Who perfected it... (8) ... and then inspired it with what entails sin and what entails piety. (9) Undoubtedly, the one who purified it has succeeded... (10) .. .and the one who soiled it has certainly failed. (11) The Thamūd falsified because of their rebelliousness. (12) When the worst of them stood up... (13) ...the messenger of Allāh warned them, "Do not interfere with the camel of Allāh and its drinking." (14) However, they denied him and killed the camel So their Lord annihilated them because of their sins and made their destruction widespread. (15) ....Allāh does not fear the consequences.

Allāh begins this Surah by taking several oaths. Allāh says, *"By the sun and its light! By the moon when it follows the sun!"* The moon following the sun is seen clearly during the middle of the lunar months when the full moon rises to dominate the sky with its radiance after sunset. The moon then remains the light of the sky until sunrise.

Allāh continues, *"By the day when it illuminates it!"* Some commentators state that the pronoun *"it"* refers to the sun. Therefore, they say that a metaphorical relationship is drawn here between the sun and the day. Although the sun is

usually regarded as the cause for the day, here the day is said to illuminate the sun. Such metaphorical relationships are commonly used in Arabic. Other commentators state that the pronoun *"it"* refers to the earth. Although the earth is not mentioned earlier in the verses of this Surah, Arabs commonly refer to a familiar phenomenon like the earth by simply using a pronoun without making prior reference to the phenomenon. The addressee then understands the meaning by implication. The implied text will therefore be: *"By the earth and the day when it (the day) illuminates it (the earth)."*

"By the night when it conceals the sun!" When night sets in, the light of the sun is concealed and only darkness prevails.

"By the sky and the One Who created it! By the earth and the One Who spread it out! By the soul (of man) and the One Who perfected it..." Commentators mention that Allāh is referring to the perfection of the body of man in which He placed the soul. Together with the perfect physical body, Allāh has also granted man his senses and the faculties of perception and intelligence.

After creating the perfect form of man, Allāh *"then inspired it (the soul) with what entails sin and what entails piety."* Allāh granted mankind the intelligence to recognise Him as their Lord and He also gave them the physical strength to worship Him. Therefore, man is obliged to worship Allāh Alone. However, because the life of this world is a test for man, man is also exposed to evil and sin, as Allāh says in Surah Balad that He has *"showed him (man) the two paths"* i.e the path of good and the path of evil. Man has therefore been granted the ability to do good as well as the ability to commit sin. Man therefore has the option to refrain from sin and to engage in good.

Allāh takes the above oaths to emphasise that *"Undoubtedly, the one who purified it (his soul) has succeeded..."* All the phenomena by which Allāh has taken oaths are in front of man and he sees each of them. It is therefore up to him to ponder about these and to realise that only Allāh controls all of them. When man recognises the great power of Allāh, he will naturally obey Allāh's commands and refrain from displeasing Him. Man will then make an effort to embellish his soul with good habits and rid it of evil character. When this is achieved, he will be on the path of salvation. Allāh says in Surah Nūr, *"The successful ones are those who obey Allāh and His apostle, who fear Allāh and do not disobey Him."* [*Surah 24, verse* 52]

On the other hand, *"the one who soiled it (his soul) has certainly failed."* The Arabic word *"dassā"* (translated above as *"soiled"*) actually means *"to cover"* or *"to conceal"*. Commentators state that in this context the word refers to covering the soul with the filth of disbelief and polytheism so that the lights of belief and good deeds are extinguished.

Among the many supplication that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to make, one of them was:

O Allāh! Imbue my soul with piety and purify it, for verily You are the best to purify it. You are its Patron and Protecting Friend?

Allāh Ta'āla then speaks of the nation of Thamud when He says, *"The Thamūd falsified because of their rebelliousness."* Because they were a rebellious nation, they falsified Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام. They told him to prove his apostleship by producing a pregnant camel from the mountain. When this miracle took place before their eyes, only a few of them believed it. Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام said to them, *"This is the camel. It will have a day to drink and your animals will have an appointed day to drink. Do not touch it with evil intentions, for then the punishment of a grave day will afflict you."* However, they did not take heed and plotted to kill the camel. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"When the worst of them stood up, the messenger of Allāh warned them, 'Do not interfere with the camel of Allāh and its drinking.'* Notwithstanding the warning, *"they denied him and killed the camel."* Not only did they kill the camel but they even said to Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام, *"O Sālih! Bring upon us that which you threaten us with if you are really from the messengers."* As a result, *"their Lord annihilated them because of their sins and made their destruction widespread"* i.e. Allāh's punishment afflicted all of them and none was left alive. The Thamūd were destroyed by an earthquake and a scream from the sky.

The details of the Thamūd are discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 73-79*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 6 1-68*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 141-159*], Surah Naml [*Surah 27, verses 45-53*], Surah HāMīm Sajdah [*Surah 41, verses 17-18*], Surah Qamar [*Surah 54, verses 23-32*] and Surah Hāqqah [*Surah 69, verses 4-5*].

"Allāh does not fear the consequences." Rulers of the world hesitate to punish people for their wrongs because they fear that the criminals or their tribes or families may revolt, thereby threatening the government. Allāh has no such fears and has the power to punish people as and when He pleases. Man should therefore be wary that he does not displease Allāh.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the night when it covers! (2) By the day when it illuminates! (3) By the One Who created male and female! (4) Verily your efforts are varied. (5) As for the one who gives, who fears Allāh... (6) ..... and who believes in the most beautiful word... (7) .... We shall make it easy for him to adopt the traits of comfort. (8) As for the one who is miserly and indifferent... (9) ...and who rejects the most beautiful word... (10) ... We shall make it easy for him to adopt the traits of grief. (11) His wealth will not benefit him when he falls to destruction. (12) Verily, guidance is Our responsibility... (13) ...and the Hereafter and the world are in Our control.

Allāh commences with three oaths. Allāh says, *"By the night when it covers! By the day when it illuminates! By the One Who created male and female!"* These three oaths are taken to emphasise that *"Verily your efforts are varied"*. The above three oaths are taken because humans are either male or female and the deeds of these two categories are carried out either by day or by night. However, these deeds are extremely diverse.

The people of the world consist of Muslims and disbelievers, each group having people who are either good or evil. Allāh will judge these deeds on the day of Judgment and each person will receive what is due to him. Sayyidina Abu Mālik Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Each morning people go to work and keep themselves busy. They either emancipate themselves (from Hell) or destroy themselves (by sinning)."* [*Muslims v. 1 p. 118*]

Allāh Ta'āla then classifies the deeds of man as either good or evil when He

says, *"As for the one who gives (charity), who fears Allāh and who believes in the most beautiful word (i.e. in the Kalimah "Lā Ilāha Illallāh"), We shall make it easy for him to adopt the traits of comfort* (Imān and good deeds). *As for the one who is miserly and indifferent and who rejects the most beautiful word, We shall make it easy for him to adopt the traits of grief"* i.e. because of these traits he will suffer grief and misery in both worlds. Some commentators have interpreted "Al Husna" (translated above as "the most beautiful word) as Heaven.

Every person carries out deeds in his life because this world is a place of deeds. These deeds vary according to the type and nature of every person. As people keep changing, so as their deeds. One will often find evil people becoming good, good people becoming evil, disbelievers becoming Muslims and vice versa. This process continues in this world. However, in the Hereafter, every person will belong only to one of the two groups and he cannot change groups.

Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم once said, "The final abode of each of you has already been fixed in Heaven and in Hell." The Companions (of the prophet) رضی الله عنهم asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم! Should we then not rely on this predetermination and forsake deeds?" The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Continue with your deeds because everything for which a person was created shall be made easy for him. Deeds leading to good fortune will be made easy for the fortunate ones and deeds leading to ill fortune will be made easy for the unfortunate." Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم recited the verses, *"As for the one who gives, who fears Allāh and who believes in the most beautiful word, We shall make it easy for him to adopt the traits of comfort. As for the one who is miserly and indifferent and who rejects the most beautiful word, We shall make it easy for him to adopt the traits of grief"* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 737*]

It is learnt from this hadith that although people's destinies have been predetermined, they have to utilise their intelligence to hold the correct beliefs and to carry out good deeds. At the same time, they should abstain from disbelief, Polytheism and sin. The person *"who believes in the most beautiful word"* refers to the believer and the person *"who rejects the most beautiful word"* is the disbeliever. Among the many good deeds a believer carries out, Allāh mentions the act of giving in charity and that of fearing Allāh. Giving in charity refers to spending one's wealth in a manner that pleases Allāh and fearing Allāh entails refraining from sin.

Concerning the miserly person, Allāh adds that he is also *"indifferent"* i.e. indifferent towards the rewards promised for spending in Allāh's path. Therefore, together with his excessive love for wealth, such a person also behaves as if he has no need for the rewards of the Hereafter. The wealth that this person hoards will be useless to him, as Allāh states, *"His wealth will not benefit him when he falls to destruction."*

Allāh continues, *"Verily, guidance is Our responsibility"*. Allāh has created man to recognise and worship Him. Allāh has also sent the Prophets علیهم السلام and the divine scriptures for man's guidance and to teach man how to worship Him. Whoever fails to respond to the guidance has only himself to blame for his destruction.

Allāh also makes it clear that *"the Hereafter and the world are in Our control."* Allāh reserves the right to do as He pleases in this world as well as in the Hereafter. No one should think that he is free to do as he pleases in this world and that none will be able to take him to task in the Hereafter.

(14) I have warned you about a raging fire... (15) ....which only the most wretched shall enter... (16) .... who denied and turned away. (17)Far removed from it shall be the most abstinent... (18) ...who spent his wealth to purify his soul. (19) He does not have to repay a favour to anyone... (20) ... (and spends for no reason) except for the pleasure of his Exalted Lord. (21) Soon he shall be pleased.

The previous verses highlighted the difference between the consequences that good deeds bring and the consequences that sins bring. The disbelievers and the sinful will have to suffer the punishment of Hell. Referring to these warnings, Allāh says, *"I have warned you about a raging fire which only the most wretched shall enter, who denied and turned away. "*Although it appears from this verse that only the disbelievers will enter Hell, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* states that the verse does not rule out punishment for sinful believers. He says that the verse merely restricts the severest punishment for the disbelievers ("the most wretched") because the punishment that sinful believers will receive will be much lighter.

"Far removed from it (from Hell) shall be the most abstinent..." The word *"atqa"* (translated above as *"most abstinent")* is in the superlative form and refers to someone who not only refrains from disbelief and Polytheism but also from all other sins as well. Describing such a person, Allāh says that he *"spent his wealth to purify his soul"* i.e. he spent his wealth so that he may join the ranks of those whom Allāh considers as pure souls. The verse may also be interpreted to mean that he has the hope that Allāh will greatly multiply the rewards for his charity. This will happen only if he spent without any worldly motives and only to please Allāh.

Speaking further about this person, Allāh says, *"He does not have to repay a favour to anyone..."* i.e. he is not spending his wealth because he owes a favour to someone. All he desires from his charity is *"the pleasure of his Exalted Lord."* As a result of his sincerity, *"Soon he shall be pleased"* when the rewards of his deeds are presented to him in the Hereafter.

Commentators state that the concluding five verses of this Surah refer to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ who sacrificed a great deal of effort and wealth for the cause of Islām before and after the Hijrah (*migration*). Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ, was an Abyssinian slave of Umayyah bin Khalaf and used to be tortured and beaten mercilessly. Upon an indication of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم,

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ purchased Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ and set him free. When the Polytheists learnt about this, they taunted Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ by saying that he bought the freedom of Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ because he owed a favour to Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ. Refuting this, Allāh Ta'āla revealed the verse: *"He does not have to repay a favour to anyone (and spends for no reason) except for the pleasure of his Exalted Lord."*

It has been reported that when Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ purchased Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ, he latter asked him whether he had bought him to do his work. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ replied, *"I have purchased you to do Allāh's work."* Thereupon, Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ said, *"Then leave me to do Allāh's work."* Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ then set him free and he continued serving Allāh's religion for the rest of his life.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم appointed Sayyidina Bilāl رضی اللہ عنہ as the Mu'adhin (one who calls out the Adhān) and he remained the Mu'adhin as long as the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم lived. Allāh Ta'āla granted him this honour of proclaiming Allāh's name because of the suffering he endured for Allāh's sake.

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ was always ready to spend his wealth for the cause of Islām. Once, when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم encouraged the companions (*Sahabah*) رضی اللہ عنہم to spend in Allāh's way, Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ thought that he would excel Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ in spending in Allāh's way by bringing along half of his belongings. However, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ brought everything he owned. When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم asked him what he had left for his family, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ replied that Allāh and His Rasul (*Prophet*) صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم were sufficient for them. Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was then forced to concede that he would never be able to excel Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once said, "I have repaid everyone for whatever favours they have done for me, except for Abu Bakr. Allāh shall repay him on the Day of Judgment. No person's wealth has ever benefited me as much as the wealth of Abu Bakr has. If I had to choose a Khalīl' (i.e. a friend whose friendship is not shared), I would choose Abu Bakr as my 'Khalīl'. However, I am Allāh's 'Khalīl'."

According to another narration, when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said that no person's wealth has benefited him as much as the wealth of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ did, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ wept and said, *"O the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم! My wealth and I are only for you."* [*Ibn Majah p. 10*]

NOTE : Allāh declares in the final verse *"Soon he [Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ] shall be pleased"*. In Surah Duha (*Surah 93, verse 5*) that follows, Allāh Ta'āla addresses the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم saying, *"Your Lord shall soon give you and you shall be pleased."* These verses make it clear that Allāh is pleased with the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and his close companion Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ. However, it is tragic to note that the Rawāfidh (Shias) are unhappy with the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم for choosing Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ as his bosom friend and are also

unhappy with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, who spent all his wealth for Allāh's pleasure and who remained with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم everywhere he went.

NOTE : One should always try to repay any person who does one a favour. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"When anyone does you a good turn, repay him. If you are unable to repay him, make supplication for him until you are satisfied that you have repaid him."*

One should bear in mind not to tell the person that what one is doing is in lieu of his favour because he may not wish for such repayment. In fact, a generous person will flatly refuse the favour. Although the Shari'ah encourages doing good unto those who do good to you, one will be rewarded more greatly if the good one does is solely for Allāh's pleasure and not prompted by the recipient's earlier favour. This is clearly indicated by the verse *"He does not have to repay a favour to anyone (and spends for no reason) except for the pleasure of his Exalted Lord."*

سورة الضحى

Makkan	Surah Duha	Verses 11

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) By the light of day! (2) By the night when it settles! (3) Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor does He dislike you. (4) The Hereafter is certainly much better for you than this world. (5) Your Lord shall soon give you and you shall be pleased. (6) Did He not find you orphaned and grant you shelter? (7) Did He not find you uninformed and show you the way? (8) Did He not find you destitute and make you wealthy? (9) So do not be harsh with the orphan. (10) Do not reproach the beggar. (11) Speak about the favours of your Lord.

This Surah was revealed in Makkah. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports that once, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was unable to perform Tahajjud Salāh (*Salāh said after midnight*) for a few days because of illness, a woman said, *"It seems as if the Satan that used to come to him has forsaken him."* Here she was referring to Jibrīl عليه السلام as a Satan (Allāh forbid!). It was then that Surah Duha was revealed. Another narration states that when the Jews asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the soul, about the people of the cave and about Dhul Qarnayn, he told them that he would give them a reply the next day. However, he forgot to say *"Insha Allāh"* (*"If Allāh wills "*) As a result, revelation ceased for a few days and the Polytheists began to taunt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying that Allāh had forsaken him and disliked him. It was then that the Surah was revealed.

After taking two oaths, Allāh Ta'āla tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor does He dislike you."* Explaining the relevance of taking oaths by the day and the night, the author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* states that the descent of revelation and the cessation of revelation are

just like day and night. Just as the alternation of the night and the day does not indicate that one has forsaken the other nor that the one dislikes the other, the descent of revelation followed by a cessation also does not mean that Allāh has forsaken the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم or that Allāh dislikes him. Just as there are reasons for the alternation of night and day, there are reasons for the pause in revelation.

Reassuring the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم further, Allāh says, *"The Hereafter is certainly much better for you than this world."* With these words, Allāh Ta'āla tells the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم not to be disturbed by the taunts and accusations of the disbelievers because these are short-lived. However, what Allāh has in store for him in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is extremely great and eternal.

"Your Lord shall soon give you and you shall be pleased." Here Allāh Ta'āla tells the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that he should not worry if he does not possess the wealth of this world because Allāh will grant him so much in the Hereafter that he will be pleased. Nothing will be lacking in the Hereafter. Because the verse seems to indicate that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would receive wealth in this world as well, the enemies of Islām have objected by saying that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did not have any wealth until his demise. This objection is futile and does not deserve attention. The fact is that the favours Allāh Ta'āla shall grant to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم will be made manifest only in the Hereafter. There, he will be conferred the position of *"Maqām Mahmūd"*, the most exalted position that any of Allāh's creation can attain.

Allāh Ta'āla then recounts the favours He blessed the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم with in this world. The Holy Prophet's صلی الله علیه وسلم father passed away before he was born. He was therefore born an orphan. According to some, he passed away after the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was born. Nevertheless, he grew up as an orphan. When he was only five years old, his mother passed away in a place called Abwa and her slave girl Umm Ayman رضی الله عنها brought the young Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم back to Makkah. Thereafter, his grandfather Abdul Muttalib took care of him for a few years. When he passed away, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم stayed with his uncle Abu Tālib, who raised him with great love and affection. Referring to this, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Did He not find you orphaned and grant you shelter?"* Although the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was an orphan, Allāh Ta'āla ensured that there was always someone to care for him with affection.

Recounting another favour, Allāh says, *"Did He not find you uninformed and show you the way?"* The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was untutored. None of his guardians tended to his education and he had no access to outside sources of learning. There was no apparent means by which he could have attained knowledge, especially the knowledge of Shari'ah. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم in Surah Shura, *"You did not know what was the Book or what was Belief, but We made it a light with which We guide those bondsmen of Ours whom We will. Without doubt, you guide towards the straight path."* [*Surah 42, verse 52*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was made a Nabi (*Prophet*) purely through Allāh's grace. Allāh Ta'āla gave him a complete Shari'ah, informed him about the narratives of previous nations and taught him about matters of the unseen such

as the angels, Heaven, Hell, etc. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Surah Nisā [*Surah 4, verse 113*], *"Allāh has revealed to you the Book and wisdom and taught you what you knew not. The grace of Allāh upon you has been tremendous indeed."* A verse of Surah Bani Isrā'īl states, *"Indeed His grace upon you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] has been tremendous."* [*Surah 17, verse 87*]

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, Allāh says, *"Did He not find you destitute and make you wealthy?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم lived with Abu Tālib for the greater portion of his youth. Abu Tālib was not a rich man so the condition of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the same. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was twenty-five years old, a rich widow by the name of Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها heard about his excellent character and employed him to lead her trade caravan to Shām. She sent her slave along with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When they returned with a substantial profit and the slave praised the noble character of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها proposed to him. He accepted the proposal and his uncle Abu Tālib and other members of his family graced the wedding. Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها was extremely wealthy and she permitted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to spend the wealth as he pleased. Therefore, commentators interpret the above verse as *"Did He not find you destitute and make you wealthy with the wealth of Khadīja رضى الله عنها?"*

Because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم grew up as an orphan and understood the hardship of being without parents, Allāh Ta'āla addressed him saying, *"So do not be harsh with the orphan."* Although the verse addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it applies to the entire Ummah. Many Ahadīth emphasise the importance of treating orphans kindly. Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Whoever strokes the head of an orphan solely for Allāh 's pleasure will receive a reward for every hair that comes under his hand, I and the person who treats an orphan well shall be like this in Heaven."* Saying this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم joined his index and middle fingers. [*"Mishkāt" p. 723*]

Allāh commands further, *"Do not reproach the beggar."* Just as orphans are often without benefactors and sympathisers, there are many people also without sympathisers and in need even though they are not orphans. Among these are people who are forced to beg. When one is unable to give a beggar anything, one should at least speak kindly to him so as not to give him further grief. It is against the nature of a believer to reproach a beggar because reproaching a beggar is tantamount to oppression. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, *"Send the beggar away with something even though it is with a burnt hoof"*

Unfortunately, there are many professional beggars to be found who are wealthy. Such people should not be begging. The Shari'ah prohibits begging if a person has means to provide for himself. At the same time, the Shari'ah also encourages Muslims to give something to beggars without reproaching them because one cannot be certain that the beggar is not genuine. In fact, Muslims are encouraged to search for needy persons who do not beg and give their charities to them.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Speak about the favours of your Lord."*

Allāh has showered His bounties on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. These bounties are not restricted to this world but extend into the Akhirah *(Hereafter)* as well. Allāh gave the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم honour and respect in addition to the greatest bounty of Prophethood. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had millions of followers in the past, has millions today and will have many millions until the Day of Judgment. There are millions of Durūds (*Benedictions*) dedicated to him at all times. In appreciation of all these bounties, Allāh Ta'āla instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to speak about His bounties. This verse also instructs the Ummah to do the same. One should bear in mind that one should not be boasting when speaking about Allāh's bounties.

Sayyidina Mālik bin Nadhr رضى الله عنه narrates that he once appeared before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while wearing clothes of an extremely poor quality. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he had any wealth. When he replied in the affirmative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him what wealth he possessed. He replied by saying that he had every type of wealth: camels, cows, goats, horses and slaves. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told him, *"If Allāh has given you wealth, the sign of this wealth ought to be visible on you."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 375*]

It is therefore necessary that Allāh's bounties be made known in one's wealth, on one's person and on one's tongue. It will not be redundant to reiterate that when one is recounting Allāh's bounties on one, one's intention should not be to boast and show off. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned, *"Eat what you please and wear what you please as long as you avoid two things; extravagance and pride."*

NOTE: According to the Imāms of Qirā'ah, it is Sunnah to recite *"Allāhu Akbar"* after every Surah from Surah Duha up to the end of the Qur'ān (Surah Nās). They have recorded this in their books with a chain of narrators. Allāma Jazari رحمة الله عليه has written about this in detail. He has mentioned that it was the practice of the leading Qurra [*who recite the Qur'ān in a special manner (plural of Qāri)*] and has commented on the chains of narrators. He has also quoted a hadith of Hākim in substantiation. In this regard, the Muhaddithīn (*Scholars of Hadīth*) also quote a hadith that is narrated by a continuous chain of Qurra, which one of the Imāms of Qirā'ah Abul Hasan Muhammad bin Ahmad Al Bazzi رحمة الله عليه has narrated. This chain of narrators reaches the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, according to Imām Bazzi رحمة الله عليه, it is Sunnah to recite *"Allāhu Akbar"* after these Surahs. Besides him, other Imāms of Qirā'ah have also encouraged this addition.

While some Qurra recite only *"Allāhu Akbar"*, others recite *"Lā Ilāha Illallāhu Allāhu Akbar"*. When reciting in this manner, the relevant rules of joining Surahs have to be taken into account. The details of this can be learnt from the Qurra.

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In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Did We not expand your chest for you? (2) And did We not relieve you of your burden... (3) .... thát was breaking your back? (4) And We have elevated your fame. (5) There is certainly ease after every difficulty. (6) Without doubt, there is ease after every difficulty. (7) So when you have completed, then exert yourself.. (8) . . .and turn to your Lord.

Surah Inshirāh is also called Surah Alam Nashrah. Like the previous Surah, this Surah also mentions the great favours that Allāh had bestowed on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Did We not expand your chest for you?"* Allāh had filled the chest of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the light and knowledge of Prophethood. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم bore in his heart the wealth of Belief, recognition of Allāh, the Qur'ān, wisdom and great traits like patience, tolerance, gratitude and a myriad of other noble qualities. Another great bounty was contentment of heart, which (in Arabic) may also be expressed as *'expansion of the chest"*.

This great boon has also been granted to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that after reciting the verse *"Whoever Allāh wishes to guide, He expands his bosom for Islām"*, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"When celestial light (nūr) enters the heart, the heart expand."* The Prophet's companions (*Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم enquired, "O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *is there a sign by which one may recognise this?"* The Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"Yes, the sign is that a person becomes detached from the 'Home of Deceit' (the world), turns towards the 'Home of Eternity' (Hereafter) and prepares for death in advance."* [*Mishkāt p. 446*]

Explaining the verse under discussion, Scholars have also quoted the

Ahadīth which describe the occasions when Allāh Ta'āla sent the angels to cut open the chest of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and to fill his heart with knowledge and wisdom. This happened once while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was still a child and living with his foster mother. It also happened on the night in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله علي وسلم was taken for Mi'rāj (as reported in Bukhari and Muslim). *"Durrul Manthūr"* (*v. 6 p. 363*) reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه that this also happened when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was twenty years old. This narration is found in the *"Zawāid (addition)"* of Imām Ahmad's رحمة الله عليه *"Musnad"*.

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, *"And did We not relieve you of your burden that was breaking your back?"* Some commentators state that relief of the burden is contained in verse 2 of Surah Fath (*Surah 48*) where Allāh says, *"So that Allāh may forgive you for those shortcomings that have passed and those that may occur in the future.* "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم regarded the human errors that he sometimes made as serious infractions. This was naturally very burdensome for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. By declaring blanket forgiveness for every past and future error, Allāh Ta'āla relieved the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from the burden of his conscience.

In my humble opinion, the better interpretation is that which Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has narrated from Abdul Aziz bin Yahya رحمة الله عليه and Abu Ubaydah رحمة الله عليه. According to them, the verse means that Allāh Ta'āla had lightened the burdensome tasks of prophethood for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that they should not be too difficult for him. Together with the tremendous favours that Allāh bestowed on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh Ta'āla also gave him a great task. His duty to propagate Oneness of Allah among the polytheists brought great difficulties and persecution which had to be tolerated without retaliation. Thereafter, the illustrious Sahabah رضى الله عنه also shouldered the responsibility and Islām spread very far.

"And We have elevated your fame." The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name is taken together with Allāh's name in the Kalimah, the Adhān, the Iqāma, in sermons and whenever a talk or a book is introduced. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was taken on Mi'rāj and Jibrīl عليه السلام knocked on the doors of the heavens, it was asked, *"Who is there?"* When Jibrīl عليه السلام identified himself, he was asked who was with him. He would then reply, *"Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم."* This occurred at each of the seven heavens. Therefore, the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name was resounding in the heavens as well.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that all the previous scriptures contained mention of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Prophets عليهم السلام were commanded to inform their people about the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In the Hereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will enjoy the highest position among Allāh's creation when he attains the status of *"Maqām Mahmūd"* His fame will then be apparent in front of all Allāh's creation. He will also receive the fountain of *"Kowthar"* which no other shall receive.

It is no secret that billions of Muslims throughout the ages regard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم greater than themselves and their parents. In fact, many disbelievers also have tremendous respect for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

They have also written books and delivered speeches in praise of him. Even his enemies find it difficult not to praise him.

Allāh promises, *"There is certainly ease after every difficulty. Without doubt, there is ease after every difficulty."* It cannot happen that a person suffers only hardships without respite. Allāh reiterates the principle so that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims in general may be consoled when they experience difficulties. Whenever the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم experienced hardships while propagating the Religion, they always took solace in this promise of Allāh. In this manner, their difficulties were eased considerably.

"Durrul Manthūr" narrates from Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once emerged from his home in a very happy mood. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"One difficulty cannot overcome two eases." The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *was reciting the verses, "There is certainly ease after every difficulty. Without doubt, there is ease after every difficulty."*

According to another narration , Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رحمة الله عليه reported that a stone was in front of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he said, "If any difficulty enters this stone, ease will follow the difficulty into the stone and remove it." It was then that Allāh revealed the verse *"There is certainly ease after every difficulty. Without doubt, there is ease after every difficulty."*

When an Arabic noun is repeated and each time it is preceded by *"al"* (the letters *"Alif"* and *"Lām"),* both nouns will be regarded as one. However, when a noun is repeated without *"al"* each time, the two will be regarded as separate entities. In the above two verses, the Arabic word *"usr"* (translated above as *"difficulty")* is repeated with the addition of *"al"* each time *(al-usr).* Therefore, the verses refer to a single difficulty. At the same time, the word *"usr"* (translated above as *"ease")* is repeated without the addition of *"al".* The verses therefore refer to two eases. As a result, there are always two eases with every difficulty, as indicated by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the narration of Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه.

It may also be said that all one's difficulties in this world are like a single difficulty. In this very world, Allāh Ta'āla continues to grant ease to a person. This is the first ease. The second will be granted in the Hereafter. Therefore, the difficulties of this world are amply rewarded because together with the ease of this world, it also accrues the everlasting rewards of the Hereafter.

Allāh Ta'āla then says to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"So when you have completed, then exert yourself and turn to your Lord.* "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself greatly to propagate the religion and much of his time was occupied with this. Because this task was a command of Allāh, it falls under the ambit of Ibādah (*worship*) and its rewards are exceptionally great. However, despite being engaged in this act of Ibādah (*worship*) all day, Allāh Ta'āla still commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to devote time to turn to Him by carrying out direct Ibādah (*worship*) that does not have people in between. This is the Ibādah (*worship*) that one carries out in privacy and entails the true meaning of Ibādah (*worship*). The effort of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to turn man's attention towards Allāh and make them Muslims so that they fulfil the purpose of their creation, which Allāh defines in verse 56 of Surah Dhāriyāt

(*Surah 51*) when He says, *"I have created man and Jinn only to worship Me."*

Together with calling mankind to Allāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also performed the obligatory salāh and would spend long hours engaged in Nafl (*optional prayer*) Salāh. In fact, he used to stand so long in tahajjud salāh (*supererogatory prayer*) that his feet used to swell. The Arabic word *'fansab'* (translated above as *"exert yourself")* refers to making such an effort to do something that one becomes tired. One should therefore tire oneself when carrying out acts of Ibādah. One should not carry out acts of Ibādah only when one finds it convenient. If one engages in Ibādah only when it is convenient, one will even forsake the Obligatory acts of Ibādah (*worship*). Some exertion has to take place.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) By the fig and the olive.' (2) By Mount Sinai! (3) By this peaceful city! (4) Undoubtedly, We created man in the best form. (5) Thereafter, We relegated him to the lowest of the low... (6) .... except those who believe and who carry out good deeds. Theirs shall be a reward that will never come to an end. (7) What is it then that makes you deny Judgment Day? (8) Is Allāh not the Wisest of the wise?

Allāh Ta'āla swears by the fig and the olive both of which are blessed fruit and extremely beneficial. Referring to the olive tree in Surah Nūr, Allāh says, *"the blessed tree of the olive"*. Thereafter, Allāh takes an oath *"By Mount Sinai!"* It is the same Mount Sinai that Allāh refers to in verse 20 of Surah Mu'minūn (*Surah* 23). This was the mount where Allāh Ta'āla spoke to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Allāh Ta'āla then takes and oath *"By this peaceful city!"* i.e. by the city of Makkah. Just as the subjects of the previous three verses are blessed, the fourth is also blessed because it contains the Ka'ba about which Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān that it is *"blessed and a guidance for mankind"*

Allāh Ta'āla has taken these four oaths to emphasise that *"Undoubtedly, We created man in the best form."* The intelligence and understanding of man is far greater than any other creation. Man is physically more good-looking than the other creation, is able to speak better and has a much more developed way of life. His behaviour and mannerisms are also much more refined. Man has two arms, two legs and is taller than most creatures. The features of his face are also most attractive, as are his limbs. He is able to exercise fine motor control over his limbs and can accomplish delicate work as well as exert brute force. Allāh has granted him beauty in every part of his body and even the little parts of the body like the teeth and eyes sparkle. His hair and his beard enhance his beauty further.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Pure is the Being who has beautifies men with their beards and women with their long hair."*

A study of human anatomy will astound a person. Every limb of the body can move in many different ways. Man is able to hold, move and lift various things with movements of his hands and arms. The thumb alone is a masterpiece of creation without which man will be unable to hold things. The functioning of the ears, the eyes, the mouth, the teeth and nose are all wonders in their own right. Gathered together on the head, they form a beautiful and coherent assortment, each one complementing the other. The flexibility of the tongue, the arrangement of the teeth and the mastery of the vocal cords allow man to roar like a lion and sing as beautifully as a nightingale.

Man's body can be bent in half from waist, allowing him to bow in Ruku (*kneeling*) and also to prostrate in Sajdah (*prostration*). The flexibility of his waist and knees allows man to sit and to manoeuvre in almost any position.

Together with this, his legs are able to walk with him, run with him and even control the vehicles and animals he travels with. The symmetry and proportion of every part of man's body is also a wonder in itself, lending it beauty. If one has to ponder more deeply, the wonders of the human body will tire armies of writers and fill many libraries.

In addition to all of this, Allāh has also granted man intellect, through which man is able to control other creation. A combination of man's physical and intellectual capabilities has yielded millions of products which make life easier for man and assist him tremendously in his daily life. Speaking about the grace that He has blessed man with, Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"It is indeed true that We have granted honour to the children of Ādam. We carried him on land and sea, provided him with pure sustenance and granted him great superiority over many of Our creation."* [*Surah 17, verse 70*]

Man's physical beauty is evident from the fact that if the least attractive person was given the choice of exchanging bodies with the most beautiful animal, he would certainly refuse.

Allāh Ta'āla says further that after creating man in the best of forms, Allāh Ta'āla *"relegated him to the lowest of the low."* In the prime of his life, man is brimming with strength and vigour and all his faculties are functioning at their best. However, when man ages he grows physically weaker and even begins to lose his mental prowess. His faculties begin to dwindle, he frequently forgets things, his body bends over and his legs can barely carry him. The man who was once supporting others now needs a support for himself. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Yāsīn, *"He whom We advance in age, We diminish in structure. Do they not understand?"* [*Surah 36, verse 68*]

Allāh Ta'āla then makes and exception when He says, *"except those who believe and who carry out good deeds. Theirs shall be a reward that will never come to an end."* This verse makes it clear that even after reaching old age, a believer is never useless. Even at this age, he can accumulate rewards for the Hereafter that are eternal. On the other hand, the disbeliever suffers the inhibitions of old age in this world and will still have misery coming to him in the Hereafter when he will be doomed to Hell.

An even more satisfying interpretation of the verse is that which *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* reports from Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه. They interpret *"the lowest of the low"* to mean the lowest level of Hell. Therefore, the verse means that instead of being grateful for the perfect body and soul that Allāh has granted him, man expresses ingratitude by disbelieving in Allāh and refusing to follow the Prophets عليهم السلام. As a result, he becomes deserving of Hell. Among the disbelievers and sinners, there are various ranks, some worse than others. Among them, there will be many who are deserving of the worst forms of punishment in Hell. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Nisā, *"Most assuredly, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest depth of the fire."* [*Surah 4, verse 145*]

Whereas Allāh made man in the best form, the disbeliever will be in the worst of conditions in the Hereafter despite the beauty and splendour he enjoyed in this world. On the other hand, the beauty of the 'Mu'minīn will be enhanced in the Hereafter and they will enjoy a multitude of bounties in Heaven.

After realising that Allāh created him in the best form when he was nothing and that he will keep moving from stage to stage, finally reaching the grave and the Hereafter, a person ought to turn to Allāh and accept His divinity. However, many people still refuse to believe and flounder in disbelief and sin. Addressing them, Allāh asks, *"What is it then that makes you deny Judgment Day?"* Allāh has proven to man many times that He is perfectly Capable of resurrecting him on the Day of Judgment just as He created him the first time. The magnificent creation of Allāh also proves that Allāh has tremendous power and strength. There should therefore be no scope for doubt.

Allāh concludes the Surah by asking, *"Is Allāh not the Wisest of the wise?"* The question is rhetorical because Allāh is definitely the Wisest of the wise, a fact already proven many times in the Qur'ān. The phrase *"Ahkamul Hākimīn"* (translated above as *"Wisest of the wise")* can also be translated as *"King of kings"* or the *"Best of those who judge"*. Each of these titles applies to Allāh, Who is Sovereign in this world and the next.

NOTE: Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when one reaches the end of Surah Tīn (*Surah 95)*, one should recite:

Allāh is certainty the 'Wisest of the wise and I am witness to it."

Similarly, when one reaches the end of Surah Qiyāmah (*Surah 75*), one should say:

"Indeed Allāh has the power to resurrect the dead?"

In a like manner, when reaching the end of Surah Mursalāt (*Surah 77*), one should recite:

"We believe in Allāh." [*"Mishkāt" p. 81 from Abu Dawūd*]

سورة العلق

Makkan	Surah Alaq	Verses 19

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Read in the name of your Lord Who created... (2) Who created man from a clot of blood. (3) Read and your Lord is most Magnanimous... (4) Who taught by the pen. (5) He taught man what he did not know.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was in the cave of Hira when divine revelation came to him for the first time. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم used to frequent the cave and took food along with him because he would spend many days there. One day, an angel approached him in the cave and said, *"Read!"* When the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said that he was unlettered and therefore unable to read, the angel embraced the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم so hard that he experienced great difficulty. Thereafter, the angel repeated the command to read and the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم gave the same reply. For the second time, the angel embraced the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم in the same manner. When he released the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, he repeated the question. Again the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم told him that he was unable to read and again the angel embraced him. Thereafter, the angel said, *"Read in the name of your Lord who created, Who created man from a clot of blood. Read and your Lord is most Magnanimous, Who taught by the pen. He taught man what he did not know."*

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم repeated what the angel said and then the angel left. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم immediately left for home in a very frightened state. He said to his wife Sayyidah Khadīja رضی الله عنها, *"Cover me! Cover me!"* When she covered him, he lay down for a while until the fear subsided. He then recounted the incident to Sayyidah Khadīja رضی الله عنهم. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 3, 4 and Muslims v. 1 p. 88*]

The verses of Surah Alaq were therefore the first verses of the Qur'ān revealed. After a while, Allāh revealed the verses, *"O you wrapped in garments. Stand up and warn. Announce the greatness of your Lord. Keep your clothing clean.*

Stay away from sin." After this, revelation began coming continuously.

Allāh Ta'āla says, *'Read in the name of your Lord who created"*. The command to read is general and does not refer to anything specific. This first verse of the Surah refers to Allāh's making of the entire creation. Allāh's creation is the greatest manifestation of His power by which we ought to recognise Him. Thereafter, Allāh refers specifically to the creation of man when He says that He *"created man from a clot of blood"* Although other animals are also created in a manner similar to man, man needs to be more grateful to Allāh because Allāh granted him intelligence. Expressing gratitude includes obedience to Allāh, engaging in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* and verbally expressing thanks for the bounties that He has bestowed on us.

Allāh continues, *"Read and your Lord is most Magnanimous, Who taught by the pen. He taught man what he did not know."* It was Allāh the Creator Who taught the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what he knew. Knowledge is not restricted to teachers and books. A great deal of knowledge is not received from them. Allāh does not require means to educate a person. Allāh Ta'āla can teach a person with or without a pen, teacher or books.

(6) It is a fact that man is rebellious... (7) ...because he considers himself to be independent (8) Verily the return shall be to your Lord. (9) Tell Me about the one who prevents... (10) ...a slave when he performs Salāh. (11) Tell Me, what if the slave is upon guidance or enjoins Piety? (12) Tell Me, what if he (the person) denies and turns away? (13) Does he not know that Allāh is watching? (14) Not at all. If he does not desist.. (15) .... We shall definitely drag him by the forelocks... (16) ... his lying, sinning forelocks. (17) Then let him call his company. (18) We shall call the angels of punishment. (19) Never! (His deeds cannot be condoned). You should never obey him! Continue performing Salāh and drawing closer (to Allāh).

The Ahadīth make it clear that the above verses refer to Abu Jahl, an arch-enemy of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He once took an oath by his idols Lāt and Uzza that he would place his foot on the neck of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in Sajdah. When he saw the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performing Salāh in the Masjidul Harām as usual one day, Abu Jahl proceeded to fulfil his oath. However, when he drew close to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he immediately stepped back, shielding his face against

something. When his companions asked him what the matter was, he replied that he had seen a trench of fire and a frightening creature with many limbs between himself and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم later mentioned that if Abu Jahl had attempted to do as he had intended, the angels would have dismembered his body. It was then that Allāh revealed the verses, *"It is a fact that man is rebellious..."* up to the end of the Surah.

"It is a fact that man is rebellious..." i.e. he oversteps the parameters of his authority as a servant of Allāh. He then holds a high opinion of himself and disobeys the commands of Allāh. The reason for man's rebelliousness is that *"he considers himself to be independent."* Because man possesses wealth and good health, he thinks that he needs no one. He fails to realise that Allāh gave him everything and that Allāh can take everything away from him. Allāh reminds man that *"Verily the return shall be to your Lord."* Irrespective of how wealthy a person is, he will have to leave this world to stand before Allāh on the Day of Judgment. Wealth, health and children will be of no assistance in the Hereafter where one will have to stand alone.

Referring specifically to Abu Jahl and also to all such disbelievers as well, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Tell Me about the one who prevents a slave (of Allāh) when he performs Salāh. (Is this behaviour not appalling?) Tell Me, what if the slave is upon guidance or enjoins (others to carry out acts of) piety (Is it then not wicked to prevent him from his Salāh)? Tell Me, what if he (the one who prevents another from Salāh) denies and turns away? (What will be his plight?)"*

Addressing every sensible person in the above verses, Allāh thrice asks, *"Tell me"*. Allāh Ta'āla prompts the reader of the Qur'ān to ponder about the miserable plight that a person will suffer for preventing someone from Salāh who follows Allāh's guidance and who enjoins others to carry out acts of piety. In addition to preventing Allāh's slave from the most noble act of Salāh, the person denies the truth and is averse to it. One can well imagine that such a person will certainly be doomed. Alluding to this person's punishment, Allāh asks, *"Does he not know that Allāh is watching?"* Allāh watches everything that this person does and will punish him for his heinous deeds.

It once occurred that Abu Jahl tried to prevent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from performing Salāh. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم rebuked him for this, Abu Jahl said that he would fill the entire valley with troops and horses against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh Ta'āla then revealed the verses, *"If he does not desist, We shall definitely drag him by the forelocks; his lying, sinning forelocks. Then let him call his company. We shall call the angels of punishment."* The verse refers to the angels of Hell, about whom Allāh says in Surah Tahrīm that they are *"Harsh and strong angels"* who *"never disobey what Allāh commands them and who carry out exactly what they have been instructed."* [*Surah 66, verse 7*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه states that if Abu Jahl and his company tried to assault the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the *"Zabāniya"* (*"angels of punishment"*) would have seized them instantly. The word *"Zabāniya"* is derived from the root word *"zabn"*, which means *"to push"*. These angels are named such because they will push people into Hell without showing mercy.

Allāh asserts, *"Never!"* i.e. such as person's deeds cannot be condoned.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, Allāh states, *"You should never obey him (i.e. the one who prevents you from performing Salāh)! Continue performing Salāh and drawing closer (to Allāh)."* Although this verse literally instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to prostrate in Sajdah (*prostration*), it has been translated as *"Continue performing Salāh"* because the verse implies performing Salāh in which many Sajdahs (*prostrations*) are made.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said *"A slave is closest to Allāh while performing Sajdah (prostration). Therefore, engage in a lot of supplication."* [*Muslim v. 1 p. 191*]

Sayyidina Rabī'ah bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه narrates that he used to spend the nights with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Once, when he brought water for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make wudhu for Tahajjud Salāh (*Salāāh said after midnight*), The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him to ask whatever he wanted. He submitted that he wanted to be in the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم company in Heaven. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him if there were further requests he wanted to make, he said that this was all. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told him, *"It shall be granted, but assist me against your Nafs by performing Sajdah (prostration) in abundance."* [*Muslim v. 1 p. 193*]

This hadith warns us that one's Nafs (*carnal self*) will not allow one to do any good deed and some effort is required to progress spiritually. One may not rely only on the supplication of others but one should make an effort by carrying out as many good deeds as possible. Among good deeds, one of the greatest is making Sajdah (*prostration*). There is no act that more effectively expresses one's humility and subservience to Allāh than placing the most honoured part of the one's body (the head) on the ground in front of Allāh. For this reason, Scholars mention that Sajdah (*prostration*) is the most important part of Salāh. Therefore, while other postures like Ruku (*kneeling*) and Qiyām [*being stand (in prayer)*] take place only once during every Rakāh, Sajdah (*prostration*) has to be performed twice.

Allāh Ta'āla says about the accursed Abu Jahl that *"We shall definitely drag him by the forelocks"*. This denotes that he will be disgraced even in this world before reaching the humiliation of the Hereafter. Consequently, he was killed in the Battle of Badr while parading pompously through his lines. In fact, he was killed after being incapacitated by two Ansār youngsters. *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports that after Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه beheaded Abu Jahl, he was unable to carry his head to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, he had to thread a string through the ears and drag it along.

Whereas the verse applies to this humiliation in this world, it also applies to the humiliation he will suffer in the Hereafter, when he will be dragged to Hell Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"They shall soon come to know when yokes will be placed around their necks, as well as chains. They will be dragged into the boiling water, after which they will be cast as fuel for the Fire."* Verse 41 of Surah Rahmān (*Surah 55*) reads: *"The criminals will be recognised by their traits and will be seized by their forelocks and feet."*

The phrase *"his lying, sinning forelocks"* describes the entire person. In fact, the expression means that his lies and sins are so profound that they have

permeated his entire body. Therefore, the effects of these evils had tainted even his forelocks.

In the above verses, Allāh Ta'āla thrice mentions the word *"kallā"* (translated above as *"It is a fact"* in verse 6, *"Not at all"* in verse 14 and *"Never"* in verse 19). The word either denotes emphasis (in which case it will be translated as *"It is a fact"* or *"Verily"*, *"Certainly"*, etc) or it may serve to rebuke someone for doing something (in which case it is translated as *"Never!"*, *"No!"*, etc).

NOTE: The verse *"Tell Me about the one who prevents a slave when he performs Salāh"* makes it clear that a Muslim does not prevent people from Salāh. It is only a disbeliever such as Abu Jahl who would do such a thing. It is therefore sad to note that many so-called Muslims prevent their children from performing Salāh by involving them in such occupations and insisting that they take employment at such institutions that do not allow Muslims to perform their Obligatory Salāh. In fact, when such children complain about this, their parents even ridicule them. Little do they realise that failure to perform Salāh will lead their children to Hell, where all their wealth will be of no avail.

In fact, many Muslim managers and directors of large companies fail to perform Salāh and do not even allow their employees to perform Salāh. When concerned employees request time off to perform Salāh, these employers brush off the request saying that taking time off for Salāh will cause the company a loss and that the employees should perform Qadhā [*Salāh, said after its due time*] at home. It is Harām (*unlawful*) to accept employment at a company that does not allow one to perform one's Obligatory Salāh and it is also not permissible to assume a managerial post at such a company. It is unfortunate that such people look only at their worldly benefit and fail to show concern for the detriment they stand to face in the Hereafter.

Believer parents have to enjoin their children to do good and prevent them from committing sins. When some people resign from their jobs after being told that their earnings are Harām (*unlawful*), their parents and relatives make absurd statements that they seem to be suffering from diarrhoea of Taqwā *(Piety)*. They tell them that it is impossible to earn Halāl (*Lawful*) wealth and that none can avoid Harām (*unlawful*) wealth. May Allāh save us all from making such foolish statements. Āmīn.

NOTE : A hadith of Muslim (*v. 1 p. 215)* makes it clear that one has to make a Sajdah Tilāwah (*prostration become due after reciting it*) after reciting Surah Alaq.

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In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Verily We revealed the Qur'ān on the night of Qadr. (2) Do you know what is the night of Qadr? (3) The night of Qadr is better than a thousand months. (4) The angels and the "Rūh" descend with every decree on this night by the command of their Lord. (5) It is full of peace and lasts until the break of dawn.

Discussing the auspiciousness of Laylatul Qadr (The night of Qadr), Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Verily We revealed the Qur'ān on the night of Qadr.* "It is a well-documented fact that the Qur'ān was revealed bit by bit over a period of twenty-three years. Commentators explain that the meaning of the verse is that on the night of Qadr the Qur'ān was brought down from the Lowhul Mahfūdh (*protected tablet*) to the heaven above the earth. There it was placed in the *"Baytul Izzah"*. It was from here that Jibrīl عليه السلام brought the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh Ta'āla declares in Surah Baqarah, *"The month of Ramadhān is the month in which the Qur'ān was revealed."* There is no discrepancy between this verse of Surah Baqarah and the first verse of Surah Qadr because the night of Qadr is in the month of Ramadhān.

Allāh highlights the virtue of the night of Qadr by posing a question first. Allāh says, *"Do you know what is the night of Qadr?"* Allāh Ta'āla then says, *"The night of Qadr is better than a thousand months."* This means that the person who engages in Ibādah (*worship*) during the night of Qadr will be rewarded more than a person who engages in Ibādah (*worship*) for a thousand months that do not include a night of Qadr.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once told about a person from the Bani Isrā'īl who carried the weapons of Jihād on his shoulders for a thousand months. Hearing this, the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! You have granted my Ummah shorter lifespan than the previous nations because of which their deeds are less."* Consequently, Allāh Ta'āla allocated the night of Qadr, the virtue of which exceeds that of a thousand months. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 513*]

A thousand months equals eighty-three years and four months. Not only is the night of Qadr equal to this period of time, but Allāh declares that it is better than this. Only Allāh Ta'āla knows how much more. This night is an excellent opportunity for Muslims to accrue rewards and prepare their abodes in Heaven. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The one who is deprived of the good of the night of Qadr has been deprived of all good. It is only a truly deprived person who will be deprived of its good."* [*Ibn Majah*]

Sacrificing a few hours in exchange for the rewards of a thousand months is truly a bargain. A person who earns a profit of hundreds of thousands for an investment of a few coppers will be exuberant. The profit of a thousand months' everlasting reward in exchange for an investment of a few temporary hours is a much greater profit. With this in mind, one will realise why the person who is deprived of such an opportunity is a truly deprived person.

Allāh Ta'āla has been extremely benevolent in granting this opportunity to this Ummah whose average lifespan is between sixty and seventy years. By exploiting this opportunity, the members of this Ummah can even surpass the deeds of the previous Ummahs, the individuals of which lived for hundreds of years.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the night of Qadr should be sought in the odd nights of the last ten nights of Ramadhān. Any one of these nights may be the night of Qadr. [*"Mishkāt" p. 182*]

Because many narrations have specified that the night of Qadr falls on the 27th night of Ramadhān, one should make an effort to spend this night in Ibādah.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever fasts during Ramadhān with Belief and with the hope of being rewarded, all his previous sins will be forgiven. Whoever stands in Ibādah during Ramadhān with Belief and with the hope of being rewarded, all his previous sins will be forgiven. Whoever stands in Ibādah during the night of Qadr with Belief and with the hope of being rewarded, all his previous sins will be forgiven."

Standing in Ibādah (*worship*) usually entails performing Salāh. However, it also includes making remembrance *(Dhikr)* and reciting the Qur'ān. Having the hope of being rewarded means that one's intention should be only to please Allāh and one should have no ulterior motives. When one has the hope of being rewarded, one will feel happy to engage in Ibādah (*worship*) and will not regard the Ibādah (*worship*) as a burden. The greater one's hope is, the easier it will be for one to exert oneself in doing even more strenuous Ibādah (*worship*). It is for this reason that the closer a person draws to Allāh, the more he will be engrossed in Ibādah (*worship*).

One should bear in mind that Ahadīth like the one above refer to the

forgiveness of minor sins. Scholars are unanimous that major sins are forgiven only after a person sincerely makes Taubah (*repentance*). When a person carries out good deeds, his sins are forgiven together with receiving rewards for them.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا once asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم what supplication she should recite if she recognised any night to be the night of Qadr. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم advised her to recite the following supplication:

> *"O Allāh! Verily You are the Most Forgiving and You love to forgive. Forgive me."*

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم did not teach his Ummah to make supplication for wealth or property. Because the matter of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* is most pertinent, he taught us to seek forgiveness from Allāh because Allāh's forgiveness will ensure salvation in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. If a person is not forgiven and has to suffer punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, all the wealth of this world will be useless to him.

THE ILL EFFECTS OF ARGUMENTS

Sayyidina Ubādah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once emerged from his room to inform the prophet's companions *(Sahabah)* رضی اللہ عنہم about when the night of Qadr would be. However, two prophet's companions *(Sahabah)* رضی اللہ عنہم were then embroiled in an argument. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, *"I had come to inform you about when the night of Qadr will fall. However, because certain people were arguing, the date of the night was lifted from my mind. Perhaps this is better in Allāh's knowledge."* [*Bukhari*]

This hadith makes it apparent that arguments are so detestable that it was an argument that caused the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم to forget the date of Laylatul Qadr.

THE ADVANTAGES OF NOT SPECIFYING WHEN THE NIGHT OF QADR WILL BE

Scholars have cited the following advantages in Laylatul Qadr being an unspecified night:

1. If Laylatul Qadr were specified, many people would have attached no importance at all to the other nights of the year. They would have then worshipped Allāh only one night a year. Since Laylatul Qadr has not been specified, they will spend more nights in Ibādah (*worship*) in search of the night.

2. There are many people who cannot avoid sin. If Laylatul Qadr were specified, they would have been sinning despite knowing the auspiciousness of the night. This would have seriously jeopardised their Belief.

3. If a person was unable to engage in Ibādah (*worship*) during Laylatul Qadr on some account, he will not be motivated to engage in Ibādah (*worship*) during any other night. In the present situation, he will still have other nights of Ibādah (*worship*) to look forward to.

4. When Laylatul Qadr is not specified, a person will have many more

nights of Ibādah to his credit.

5. Allāh Ta'āla is pleased to tell the angels about the Ibādah (*worship*) of man. Now that Laylatul Qadr is not specified, the angels are told that man is engaged in Allāh's Ibādah (*worship*) even though he does not know which night is Laylatul Qadr.

Besides these advantages, there may be many more. There is good in everything that Allāh does and it is to the advantage of the Ummah that Laylatul Qadr has not been specified.

Allāh Ta'āla says, *"The angels and the 'Rūh' descend with every decree on this night by the command of their Lord."* The majority of Scholars state that "Rūh" refers to Jibrīl عليه السلام, who is referred to as "Ruhul Qudus" in many verses of the Qur'ān. Some commentators have mentioned that it refers to Allāh's mercy.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has quoted several interpretations of *"every decree"*. Among these is that the angels come to earth with Allāh's blessings. Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Jibrīl عليه السلام descends with a group of angels from the heavens on Laylatul Qadr. They then shower Allāh's mercy on every person who is remembering Allāh either sitting or standing. When the days of Eidul Fitr dawns, Allāh Ta'āla praises man before the angels saying, *"O my angels! What is due to a labourer who completes his work?"* The angels submit, *"O our Lord! He deserves to be paid in full."* Allāh then declares, *"O my angels! My male and female slaves have fulfilled the duty that was binding on them and have now emerged from their homes to beg from Me. By My Honour, by my Majesty, by My Benevolence and by My Exaltedness! I shall certainly accept their supplication."* Allāh then says to the people, *"I have forgiven you and replaced your sins with good deeds."* People then leave the place of the Eid Salāh in a state that they are all forgiven. [*Bayhaqi*]

Allāh says further that the night *"is full af peace"*. The angels continue to shower peace, mercy and blessings on people during the night. Some commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the entire night of Qadr is full of peace and blessings. They say that Satan does not have the ability to instigate people to do evil on this night. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Allāh Ta'āla says that Laylatul Qadr *"lasts until the break of dawn."* This verse makes it evident that the blessings of Laylatul Qadr are not confined to any portion of the night. It extends from the beginning of the night and terminates only when dawn breaks.

THE MEANING OF "THE NIGHT OF QADR"

Scholars have tendered the following explanations for the naming of Laylatul Qadr:

If the word *"Qadr"* is used in the meaning of *"appreciation"*, the night of Qadr will be referred to as the night of appreciation because Allāh Ta'āla shows appreciation for the worship of His devotees by granting them an extremely handsome reward.

The word *"Qadr"* may also be translated as predestination. Scholars mention

that on this night, the angels are given their tasks for the year. Among these tasks is the distribution of sustenance, the specifying of each person who is to die in the coming year, what is to happen to every person that year, etc. This interpretation is appropriate because Allāh Ta'āla refers to the night of Qadr in the fourth verse of Surah Dukhān (*Surah 44*) when He says, "*The decision of every matter of wisdom is passed on this night.* "Because Allāh Ta'āla uses the angels to facilitate the smooth functioning of the system of the universe, they are given their instructions on the night of Qadr. Therefore, the angels are briefed about every matter that has been predestined in the Lowhul Mahfūdh for the forthcoming year.

NOTE 1: Mentioning the virtues of the night of Barā'ah (15th night of Shabān), Scholars have quoted a hadith of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. In this hadith, she states that it is on the night of Barā'ah that the decree is passed for every child to be born and for every person to pass away. The hadith also states that man's deeds are presented to Allāh on this night and people's sustenance descends. "*Mishkāt*"(*p. 115*) has reported this hadith from Imām Bayhaqi رحمه الله عليه. Because this hadith is not authentic, Scholars state that it cannot prove that such decisions are passed on the night of Barā'ah instead of the night of Qadr. However, Scholars mention that it is possible that these matters are decreed on the night of Barā'ah but the instructions are given to the angels on the night of Qadr. Allāh knows best.

NOTE 2 : Because the night of Qadr takes place during the night, the time will vary from place to place. However, the people of each place will benefit from the blessings of the night.

NOTE 3 : If one is unable to engage in Ibādah (*worship*) the entire night, one should at least perform one's Isha and Fajr Salāhs with Jamā'ah (*congregation*). Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if a person performs his Isha Salāh with Jamā'ah (*congregation*), he attains the reward of standing in Ibādah (*worship*) for half the night. If he performs his Fajr Salāh also with Jamā'ah (*congregation*), he will attain the reward of standing in Ibādah (*worship*) the entire night. [*Muslims v. 1 p.* 232]

سورة البينة

Makkan	Surah Bayyinah	Verses 8

لم يكن الذين كفروا من أهل الكتب والمشركين منفكين حتى تأتيهم البينة (1)
رسول من الله يتلوا صحفا مطهرة (2) فيها كتب قيمة (3) وما تفرق الذين أوتوا
الكتب إلا من بعد ما جاءتهم البينة (4) وما أمروا إلا ليعبدوا الله مخلصين له الدين
حنفاء ويقيموا الصلوة ويؤتوا الزكوة وذلك دين القيمة (5)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) The disbelievers from among the People of the Book and the idolaters will not desist until a clear sign comes to them. (2) A messenger from Allāh who recites pure scriptures... (3) .. .in which the subject matter is accurate. (4) Those who were given the scripture divided only after the clear sign had come to them. (5) They had been ordered only to worship Allāh, devoting their religion solely to Him and turning away from other religions. (They were also commanded to) perform Salāh and to pay Zakāh. This is the true religion.

Before the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم there were many polytheists, many Jews and many Christians. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came as a guide to them, they adamantly clung to their religions and were not prepared to accept his message without a clear sign of his Prophethood. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم showed them various miracles, the greatest of which was the Qur'ān. In addition to this, they were all well aware of his pure character.

Allāh Ta'āla says, *"The disbelievers from among the People of the Book and the idolaters will not desist (from disbelief) until a clear sign comes to them"* i.e. until a witness testifies that they will be successful only if they forsake infidelity and accept Islām. Allāh describes this "sign" (witness) as *"A messenger from Allāh who recites pure scriptures in which the subject matter is accurate."* While some commentators state that the 'pure scriptures" refer to the previous scriptures and the accurate 'subject matter" refers to the Qur'ān, others are of the opinion that the 'pure scriptures" refer to the Qur'ān and the accurate "subject matter" refers to the contents and Surahs of the Qur'ān. The accurate *'subject matter"* denotes

injunctions that are just and that lead to the straight path. Allāh refers to this in Surah Zumar where He states, *"It is an Arabic Qur'ān without any crookedness, so that they fear."* [*Surah 39, verse 28*]

Although many people accepted the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, there were many who refused to accept Islām despite witnessing many signs. A great many of those who refused to accept were the People of the Book (the Jews and the Christians). Although these people were expecting the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and claimed that they would follow him when he arrived, they eventually divided when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to them; while some believed in him, others did not. Allāh refers to his when He says, *"Those who were given the scripture divided only after the clear sign [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] had come to them."*

Allāh Ta'āla then mentions the commands that the people of the former religions received, much the same as Muslims are commanded. Allāh says, *"They had been ordered only to worship Allāh, devoting their religion solely to Him and turning away from other religions. (They were also commanded to) perform Salāh and to pay Zakāh. This is the true religion"* i.e. this is the religion of all the Prophets عليهم السلام. Although the Jews and the Christians were aware of the truth of Islām, they were rebellious and refused to submit.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ ٱلْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ ٱلْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٧﴾ جَزَآؤُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّـٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِىَ رَبَّهُۥ ﴿٨﴾

(6) Verily the disbelievers from the People of the Book and the idolaters shall abide forever in the fire of Hell. These are the worst of creation. (7) Indeed those who believe and who carry out good deeds are certainly the best of creation. (8) Their reward with their Lord is eternal gardens where they shall abide forever and ever. Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. This is for him who fears his Lord.

In the above verses, Allāh Ta'āla outlines the ultimate abode of each of the two groups of people. Concerning the disbelievers, Allāh says, *"Verily the disbelievers from the People of the Book and the idolaters shall abide forever in the fire of Hell. These are the worst of creation."* Besides the Jews, the Christians and the Polytheists, also included in the ambit of "disbelievers" are the atheists and those who do not follow any religion. The abode of all such people is Hell. Also included among the disbelievers are those people who do not believe in any Nabi (*prophet*) of Allāh عليه السلام or who do not believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's final messenger. Because Islām is the only religion that Allāh accepts from a person, everyone who does not accept Islām is regarded as a disbeliever. Therefore, Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"O Mankind! Indeed the messenger has come to you with the truth from your Lord; so believe, it will be better for you. If you*

disbelieve, then verily to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and earth. Allāh is ever All Knowing, The Wise." [Surah 4, verse 170]

Allāh Ta'āla says in verse 19 of Surah Āl Imrān (Surah 3), *"Definitely the only religion with Allāh is Islām."* In verse 85 of the same Surah, Allāh says, *"Whosoever seeks a religion besides Islam, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be, in the Hereafter, among the losers."* Thereafter, in the same Surah Āl Imrān [Surah 3, verse 91], Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, the earth full of gold shall never be accepted from any of them if they ever wish to offer it as ransom. Theirs shall be a painful punishment and they shall have no helpers.*

It should be understood well that every person who rejects Islām is a Kāfir *(a disbeliever)*. The Munāfiq *(hypocrites)* are also disbelievers because their hearts reject Islām. If any disbeliever dies as a disbeliever (without accepting Islām), he will suffer eternally in Hell. Such people are referred to as *"the worst of creation"* because in this world they have rejected their Creator and Sustainer Allāh Ta'āla and His Religion, and they will have to suffer the worst punishment in the Hereafter. Therefore, together with having the worst beliefs and deeds, their plight in the Hereafter will also be the worst.

Allāh Ta'āla then discusses the condition of the delievers in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Allāh says, *"indeed those who believe and who carry out good deeds are certainly the best of creation. Their reward with their Lord is eternal gardens where they shall abide forever and ever. Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him."* Allāh will grant these people so much in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* that there will be nothing more for them to desire.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Without doubt, Allāh shall call to the people of Heaven saying, 'O dwellers of Jannah (Heaven)!' They will reply, 'O our Lord, we are present and ready to carry out Your orders. All good is in Your control"* Allāh shall ask them, *"Are you happy?' 'How can we not be, 'they will submit, 'when You have bestowed on us what You have not given to any of Your creation?"* Allāh will tell them, *"Should I not grant you something superior to all of this?' They will exclaim, 'What can be superior to this?' Allāh will say, I shall confer My pleasure on you and I will never be angry with you in the future."* [Bukhari v.2 p.969]

Allāh Ta'āla concludes the Surah by saying, *"This is for him who fears his Lord."* This verse makes it clear that Heaven and its bounties are reserved for those who fear Allāh and accept Him as their Lord and Cherisher. They are aware of the fact that the Day of Judgment is imminent when Allāh Ta'āla will pass judgement on people and send them to either Heaven or Hell. Such people realise that they have to adhere to the tenets of Belief and that they have to carry out good deeds to attain salvation in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

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سورة الزلزال

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) When the earth shall quake most violently... (2) .... when the earth will remove her loads... (3) .... and man will ask, "What is the matter with her?" (4) On that day she will narrate her stories... (5) ...because your Lord will command her to do so. (6) On that day people will return in different groups to witness their deeds. (7) Whoever does an iota's weight of good will see it... (8) ...and whoever does an iota's weight of evil will see it.

The Arabic words *"Zilzāl"* and *"zilzala"* refer to an earthquake. The earthquake referred to in this Surah is the earthquake that will take place on the Day of Judgment. This earthquake shall be extremely severe, as Allāh mentions in the first two verses of Surah Hajj (*Surah* 22) where He says, *"O people! Fear your Lord. The earthquake of Judgment Day is a tremendous thing indeed. The day when you will witness it, every nursing mother will forget her suckling infant and every pregnant woman will abort. And you will see people in a drunken stupor although they will not be drunk, but Allāh 's punishment is severe."* This earthquake will affect not only a few towns or a country, but the entire earth.

After the convulsion of the earth, corpses will be raised from their graves and ushered to the plain of resurrection. Allāh Ta'āla says that on the Day of Judgment *"the earth will remove her loads and man will ask, 'What is the matter with her?"* On the Day of Judgment, the earth will empty her belly of all the dead and of all the treasures she hides beneath her surface. However, all this wealth will not benefit anyone. The same wealth for which man killed his brothers will now lie useless.

When man will stand for reckoning before Allāh, he will be given his record

of deeds and witnesses will attest to the deeds he committed. Among these witnesses will be the earth. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"On that day she will narrate her stories because your Lord will command her to do so."* When the earth will do this, man will be astonished and ask, *"What is the matter with her? i.e. we thought that she was lifeless. How is it that she now talks?"* The earth will talk on the Day of Judgment *"because your Lord will command her to do so."* Just as Allāh gave speech to the tongue, Allāh will give speech to man's limbs as well as to the earth so that they may testify against people.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once recited the verse: *"On that day she will narrate her stories"* and then asked the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم , *"Do you know what "her stories" are?"* The prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم submitted, *"Allāh and His Rasul (Prophet)* صلى الله عليه وسلم *know best."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم that the earth will testify to every act that any person committed on her back. She will specify exactly what deed was committed on which day. [*Tirmidhi*]

Allāh continues, *"On that day people will return in different groups to witness their deeds."* After completing their reckoning, people will be separated into two groups. Those destined for Heaven will be led to a road on the right of the plains of resurrection while those destined for Hell will be led to a road on the left. It is with reference to this that Allāh mentions in Surah Rūm, *"The day when Judgment day will dawn, that day will they be in different conditions. As for those who believe and do good deeds, they will be rejoicing in a garden. As for those who disbelieve and falsify Our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter, these people will be exposed to punishment."* [*Surah 30, verses 14-16*]

Concerning the same two groups of people on the Day of Judgment, Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Zumar, *"The disbelievers will be dragged to Hell in groups"* and *"Those who feared their Lord will be led to Heaven in groups."* [*Surah 39, verses 71,73*]

The day of Judgment will be frightful when people will be separated into these two groups and the sinners will be told, *"Separate yourselves today, O you criminals!"* The pious will then be left on their own to enter happily into Heaven. Allāh says that the two groups will proceed *"to witness their deeds."* i.e. to witness the consequences of their deeds; either Heaven or Hell.

Though brief, the concluding two verses of the Surah are extremely comprehensive. Allāh Ta'āla declares, *"Whoever does an iota's weight of good will see it (i.e. its reward) and whoever does an iota's weight of evil will see it"* i.e. will see its punishment. These verses make it clear that no good deed should be overlooked and no sin should be committed thinking it to be insignificant because one will eventually see the consequences of every deed.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once explaining the details of Zakāh to the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم , when someone asked about the Zakāh due from a person who owns donkeys. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that although no specific law was revealed to him concerning the Zakāh for donkeys, a most comprehensive verse had been revealed to him viz. *"Whoever does an iota 's weight of good will see it and whoever does an iota 's weight of evil will see it. "*[*Bukhari v. 1 p. 141 and Muslim v.. 1 p. 319*]

A person who is concerned about his life in the Ākhirah should never allow an opportunity to do a good deed pass him by. He snatches every such opportunity and even the moment in which he can recite *"Subhā Nallāh"* once is not forfeited. Sayyidina Adi bin Hātim رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Save yourself from Hell even though it may be with a piece of a date (which you give in charity). If you cannot manage this, then at least say a good word."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 971*]

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once delivering a sermon when he said, *"Behold! This world is a cash commodity from which good and evil eat. Behold! The promise of the Ākhirah (Hereafter) (although not cash) is absolutely true. The All Powerful Sovereign shall pass judgment there. Behold! All good shall be in Heaven and all evil shall be in Hell. Behold! Continue carrying out deeds, continue fearing Allāh and remember that your deeds will be presented before you because 'Whoever does an iota's weight of good will see it and whoever does an iota's weight of evil will see it."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 445*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to her, *"Avoid even the smallest sins because Allāh Ta'āla has appointed those who seek them (i.e. the recording angels who record them)."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 458*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه once told the people with him, *"You people carry out deeds that you regard to be finer than a strand of hair (i.e. you regard them to be insignificant) whereas during the time of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *we used to regard them to be devastating."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 961*]

THE VIRTUE OF SURAH ZILZĀL

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Surah Zilzāl equals half the Qur'ān, Surah Ikhlās (*Surah 112*) equals a third of the Qur'ān and Surah Kāfirūn (*Surah 109*) equals a quarter of the Qur'ān. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked someone whether he was married. When the person replied that he was unable to marry because he did not have the means, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he knew Surah Ikhlās (*Surah 112*). When he replied in the affirmative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that Surah Ikhlās equalled a quarter of the Qur'ān. Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he knew Surah Kāfirūn. When he replied in the affirmative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that Surah Kāfirūn equalled a quarter of the Qur'ān. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then asked him whether he knew Surah Zilzāl. When he replied in the affirmative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that Surah Zilzāl equalled a quarter of the Qur'ān. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then instructed him to marry, telling him that Allāh Ta'āla would get him married by the blessings of these Surahs. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

There is no contradiction between the narrations that place the reward of Surah Zilzāl as a quarter of the Qur'ān and those that place its reward as half the Qur'ān because it is possible that Allāh Ta'āla increased the reward from a quarter to half. The same applies to the reward of Surah Ikhlās which is placed at a quarter as well as a third of the Qur'ān.

سورة العديت

Makkan	Surah Ādiyāt	Verses 11

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

وَٱلْعَٰدِيَٰتِ ضَبْحًا ﴿1﴾ فَٱلْمُورِيَٰتِ قَدْحًا ﴿2﴾ فَٱلْمُغِيرَٰتِ صُبْحًا ﴿3﴾ فَأَثَرْنَ بِهِۦ نَقْعًا ﴿4﴾ فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِۦ جَمْعًا ﴿5﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لِرَبِّهِۦ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿6﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿7﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لِحُبِّ ٱلْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿8﴾ ۞ أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿9﴾ وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿10﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌۢ ﴿11﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the horses that pant as they gallop! (2) By the sparks that fly from the striking of their hooves! (3) By their assault at dawn... (4) ... causing the dust to fly... (5) ...and penetrating the midst of the enemy's ranks. (6) Undoubtedly man is extremely ungrateful to his Lord. (7) Indeed, he is also a witness to this fact. (8) Verily he has a profound love for wealth. (9) Is he not aware of the time when whatever lies within the graves shall be raised ... (10) and whatever lies within chests will be exposed? (11) On that day their Lord shall certainly be Informed about them.

Allāh takes oaths by five attributes of horses to emphasise the fact that man is extremely ungrateful to Allāh. Allāh Ta'āla says, *"By the horses that pant as they gallop! By the sparks that fly from the striking of their hooves! By their assault at dawn causing the dust to fly and penetrating the midst of the enemy's ranks."* The Arabs held horses in very high esteem. They were constantly fighting each other and often camped outside the town of their enemies by night and launched surprise attacks at the crack of dawn. They plundered the towns they attacked and looted the people. Allāh reminds man of the great bounty that He has bestowed on him by providing such animals for him who will be faithful to him in the very thick of battle. Man is therefore obliged to be grateful to Allāh for this and His many other bounties. Man ought to express his gratitude to Allāh by obeying Allāh's commands and by following the teachings of Allāh's Nabi (*prophet*) Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. The horses which they used for wrong purposes should now be used in Allāh's obedience.

Some commentators are of the opinion that the Surah refers to horses that

are used for Jihād in Allāh's path. Others mention that the verses refer to horses that are used during Hajj to transport the Hujjaj (*pilgrims*) from Arafāt to Muzdalifa and from Muzdalifa to Mina.

"Undoubtedly man is extremely ungrateful to his Lord." Although the most accepted interpretation of the Arabic word *"kunūd"* is *"extremely ungrateful"*, some commentators have interpreted it to mean someone who does little good. Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that it refers to a person who counts his difficulties and forgets the bounties he is blessed with. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 518*]

Allāh continues, *"Indeed, he (man) is also a witness to this fact"* i.e. to the fact that he is extremely ungrateful. In addition to this, *"Verily he has a profound love for wealth."* Man is reluctant to spend his wealth for others and is ever eager to accumulate more.

Allāh asks, *"Is he (man) not aware of the time when whatever lies within the graves shall be raised and whatever lies within chests will be exposed?" Allāh Ta'āla asks whether people have perhaps forgotten "the day when they will hurriedly emerge from the graves"* because their attitude seems to betray this. Man ought to keep this day in mind at all times so that he continues to fulfil Allāh's commands, knowing that he will be taken to task for violating these. Everything that man conceals within his heart will be exposed on the Day of Judgment. Everyone on the plains of resurrection will be able to see the evil designs that each person harboured in their hearts along with the intense love for wealth that their hearts concealed.

Allāh is Informed about the deeds and condition of His creation at all times. However, because the Day of Judgment is the day when reckoning will take place and the day when deeds will be brought to the fore, Allāh mentions, *"On that day their Lord shall certainly be Informed about them."*

سورة القارعة

Makkan	Surah Qāri'ah	Verses 11

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) The knocker. (2) What is the knocker? (3) What shall inform you what the knocker is? (4) (It is) the day when people will become like scattered moths... (5) .... and the mountains will become like coloured cotton wool. (6) As for him whose scales are weighty... (7) ... he shall be (enjoying) a life of happiness. (8) As for him whose scales are light... (9) .... his abode shall be "Hāwiya". (10) How will you know what this is? (11) (It is) the blazing fire.

This Surah describes Judgment day (*Qiyāmah*) as someone knocking at one's door. When resurrection Day comes, people will be engaged in their various activities. Some will be attending to their businesses and occupations while others will be sleeping. It will take place suddenly and everyone will be caught unawares, just as people are surprised by unexpected visitors knocking at their doors. To emphasise the importance of the Day of Judgment, Allāh asks, *"What is the knocker? What shall inform you what the knocker is?"* Allāh Ta'āla then describes Judgment day as *"the day when people will become like scattered moths."* Just as moths are bewildered and dazed by a bright light and scatter in confusion, people will suffer the same confusion on the Day of Judgment. Allāh uses another simile in Sarah Qamar when He says, *"they shall emerge.. from their graves as if they are scattered locusts."*[*Surah 44, verse 7*]

Describing the condition of the mighty mountains on the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"the mountains will become like coloured cotton wool.* "Even though they are symbols of stability, the mountains will fly about like wool on the day of

Judgment. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"And the mountains will be shattered to pieces and become like scattered dust."* Verse 3 of Surah Takwīr (*Surah 81*) reads: *"When the mountains are made to fly about."* If this is to be the state of the mountains, one cannot imagine the disorientation that the rest of creation will experience. Allāh Ta'āla says that the mountains will resemble coloured wool because mountains are of different colours, as Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"From the mountains there are different ridges, varying from white to red of different shades and some which are extremely black."* [*Surah 35, verse 27*]

After describing the advent of the Day of Judgment, Allāh Ta'āla describes the condition of people on the Plains of Resurrection. Allah says *"As for him whose scales are weighty, he shall be (enjoying) a life of happiness."* The people of Heaven shall be completely satisfied with their lives. They will have absolutely no hardship or worries in Heaven.

On the other hand, *"As for him whose scales are light, his abode shall be 'Hāwiya'. How will you know what this is? It is) the blazing fire."* Allāh says about the scales of deeds in Surah A'rāf, *"The weighing on that day is the truth! As for him whose scale is heavy, these will be the successful ones. As for him whose scale is light, these are the ones who have lost their souls because they were unjust towards Our verses."* The details of the scales of deeds are discussed in Surah Kahf [*Surah 18, verse 105*] and Surah Mu'minūn [*Surah 23, verses 102,103*].

Some Scholars state that the scales here in Surah Qāri'ah refer to the scales that measure belief and disbelief. Therefore, those who have belief shall be admitted into Heaven, while the disbelievers shall suffer eternally in Hell. It is this same group of Scholars who interpret verse 105 of Surah Kahf (*Surah 18*) to mean that the deeds of the disbelievers will not be weighed at all on the day of Judgment. Some commentators state that the weighing of deeds here refers to Allāh Ta'āla's weighing of the deeds of the believers. Therefore, those whose evil deeds are heavier will be admitted into Hell to be cleansed of their sins while those whose good deeds are heavier will go straight to Heaven.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has mentioned that those whose good deeds are heavier than their sins shall be admitted into Heaven even if they are heavier by a single deed. On the other hand, those whose sins are heavier than their good deeds will be doomed for Hell even if they are heavier by a single sin. He then recited the above verses of Surah A'rāf where Allāh Ta'āla says, *"The weighing on that day is the truth! As for him whose scale is heavy, these will be the successful ones. As for him whose scale is light, these are the ones who have lost their souls because they were unjust towards Our verses."* [*Surah 7, verses 8,9*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه also mentioned that these scales will be sensitive to even an iota's weight of good or sin. Those whose good deeds are equal to their sins will be detained at *"A'rāf"* (the barrier between Heaven and Hell. They will also be admitted in Heaven eventually). Those whose sins are heavier will also be eventually admitted into Heaven either by someone's intercession, after being cleansed of sin or purely by Allāh's grace. A Mumin (*Believer*) cannot remain eternally in Hell nor on A'rāf.

"As for him whose scales are light, his abode shall be 'Hāwiya'. How will you know what this is? It is) the blazing fire." The Arabic word *"umm"* (translated above as

"abode") literally refers to a mother. Hell will cling onto the people of Hell just as a mother clings onto her sibling. This is because these people clung to sin in this world in the same way. The Arabic word "Hāwiya" refers to something that falls. Hell is described as "Hāwiya" because of its extreme depth. Sayyidina Utba bin Ghazwān رضى الله عنه narrates that a stone cast into Hell will continue falling for seventy years without reaching the bottom. [*"Mishkāt" p. 497 from Muslim*]

سورة التكاثر

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Rivalry in amassing wealth has made you negligent... (2) ... until you reach the graves. (3) Never! Soon you will come to know! (4) Never! Soon you will come to know! (5) If you had certain knowledge (you would not have preoccupied yourself with rivalry). (6) (By Allāh) you will definitely see Hell! (7) (By Allāh) you will then surely see it with the eye of certainty. (8) Thereafter on that day you will definitely be questioned about the bounties.

The Arabic word *"takāthur"* refers to mutual rivalry between people in amassing wealth, a trait which is commonly witnessed in many people. People vie with each other in amassing wealth and boast about their wealth to each other. Even though some people may not boast in front of others, this rivalry is ingrained in their mentality and they are always competing with others. Allāh Ta'āla declares in Surah Hadīd, *"Know that the life of this world is merely play, futility, decoration, boasting among each other and rivalry in wealth and children."* [*Surah 57, verse 20*]

Being engrossed in competing with others in amassing wealth has caused man to neglect those actions that please Allāh and has also caused him to forget that he is heading for the grave. In this manner, people pass through this world steeped in negligence and, when they face the reality of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, they are bewildered and lacking good deeds. Then the wealth they amassed will be useless to them. Allāh refers to this when He says, *'Rivalry in amassing wealth has made you negligent until you reach the graves."*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 4 p. 520*) has reported the following incident about this rivalry among the Arabs. Rivalry existed between the Banu Abd Manāf bin Qussay tribe and the Banu Sahm bin Amar tribe of Makkah. On one occasion,

both tribes boasted that they had a greater number of nobles and leaders. After counting, it was found that the number among the Banu Abd Manāf tribe was higher. The Banu Sahm tribe submitted that their deceased should also be included in the count because these had been part of their tribe. When the dead were counted, the Banu Sahm emerged as victors by a few individuals. It was with reference to this that Allāh revealed the verse *"Rivalry in amassing wealth has made you negligent..."*

Allāh continues, *"Never! (This rivalry will not benefit you) Soon you will come to know (the error of your ways)!"* Allāh then reiterates, *"Never! Soon you will come to know!"*

Allāh says, *"If you had certain knowledge (you would not have preoccupied yourself with rivalry)."* Allāh Ta'āla specifies *"Ilmul Yaqīn"* ("certain knowledge") because knowledge is often uncertain as well. Thereafter, Allāh asserts, *"(By Allāh) you will definitely see Hell! (By Allāh) You will then surely see it with the eye of certainty."* When man sees the reality of the Hereafter for himself, he will truly be convinced about the truth of it. Describing the three levels of certainty, Scholars mention that every living person has "Ilmul Yaqīn" ("certain knowledge") about death. However, when man sees the angels of death approaching him, he experiences "Aynul Yaqīn" (seeing death with the "eye of certainty"). Finally, "Haqqul Yaqīn" ("the irrefutable truth") is achieved once a person actually dies. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 30 p. 260*]

Several verses of the Qur'ān warn people against preoccupying themselves with the commodities of this world in a manner that their lives revolve completely around these things and they live and die for them. Allāh warns man that the consequence of such behaviour shall be that they will see Hell and finally enter it. These verses remind man that this world is not everything and that death and the Hereafter are soon to follow.

Allāh concludes the Surah by stating, *"Thereafter on that day you will definitely be questioned about the bounties." "Ruhul Ma'āni"* contains a lengthy discussion concerning this verse. The discussion centres around who will be questioned about Allāh's bounties and when will this questioning take place? Because this verse follows the previous verses, it seems that the subject matter is related. Therefore, this verse is also addressed to those people who will see Hell and who will be made to enter Hell. They will be questioned about Allāh's bounties to them to rebuke them for abusing these bounties and for not using these to please Allāh and to prepare for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).*

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"On the Day of Judgement, man will be brought forward like a lamb. He will then be presented before Allāh, Who will ask, 'Did I not grant you wealth and bounties? What did you do with these?' He will reply, 'I accumulated it and multiplied it until it flourished Then I left it all behind Allow me to return and bring it all before you."*

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم continued, "Allāh will say, *'Show Me what you had sent ahead here [to the Ākhirah (Hereafter)]. 'He will again reply, 'I accumulated it and multiplied it until it flourished Then I left it all behind Allow me to return and bring it all before You. "It will then transpire that he was one* who had not performed any good deeds on earth. He will then be flung into Hell." [*Mishkāt p. 443*]

Although it seems as if the verse addresses those who are destined for Hell, the general nature of the words make it impossible to rule out the possibility that every person will be questioned about the bounties that Allāh blessed him with. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that man's foot will be unable to move from the place of reckoning until he answers five questions. These questions shall be:

1. *In what way did he spend his life?*
2. *In what pursuits did he spend his youth?*
3. *How did he earn his wealth?*
4. *How did he spend his wealth?*
5. *Did he practise the knowledge he had? [Tirmidhi]*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the first questions that Allāh will ask man concerning bounties shall be: *"Did I not give you good health?" and "Did I not quench your thirst with cold water?"* [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always advised His companions (*Sahabah*) رضى الله عنهم to thank Allāh for His bounties. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه were once guests at the house of an Ansāri companion *(Sahabi)* رضى الله عنه. He served them a branch of a date palm on which there were ripe, dry and semi-ripe dates to choose from. He then slaughtered a goat and cooked the meat for them. When they had eaten dates and meat and drank water to their fill, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, *"I swear by the Being in Whose control is my life! You will certainly be questioned about these bounties on the Day of Judgment (i.e. about whether you expressed gratitude for the bounty and whether you used the strength derived from the food for good or not). Hunger brought you out of your homes and Allāh has blessed you with these bounties before you could return home."* [*Muslim*]

Another narration reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once met an Ansāri Companion *(Sahabi)* رضى الله عنه in his orchard. He served them a branch from a date palm from which they ate. When they asked for cold water, he served them some. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told them that they would be questioned about this bounty on the Day of Judgment. Hearing this, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه dropped the branch from his hand, causing all the dates to be scattered about. He then asked, *"O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Will we be questioned about this?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم confirmed that people will be questioned about every bounty except three. These are:

1. *A small piece of cloth used to cover the private parts.*
2. *A piece of bread that appeases hunger.*
3. *A home to protect one from the heat and cold which is so small that one has difficulty entering it. [Mishkāt" p. 369]*

Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that man has a right only to three things and to nothing else. These are:

1. *A house to live in.*
2. *Sufficient clothing to conceal his private parts.*

3. Plain bread (without gravy) and water. [Tirmidihi]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Shakhīr رضى الله عنه narrates that he entered the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was reciting Surah Takāthur and saying, *"Man says, 'My wealth! My wealth!' whereas only three things are actually his. (1) The food that he ate and digested, (2) the clothing that he wore out, and (3) the charity that he spent and sent ahead (for the Hereafter).* " Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has narrated the same hadith with the addition that a person will leave all else (besides the above three things) for his heirs. [*"Mishkāt" p. 440*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a man will have three registers on the Day of Judgment. The first register will contain his good deeds, the second register will contain all his sins and the third will contain all the bounties that Allāh blessed him with. Allāh will tell the smallest bounty to take its price from the person's good deeds. The smallest bounty will take all the good deeds and will submit that it has still not taken its full price. The person will then still have all the sins to account for and the rest of the bounties to pay for. However, when Allāh wishes to shower a person with mercy, He will tell him, *"O My slave! I have increased your good deeds and forgiven your sins."* The narrator of the hadith states that it was most probably on his occasion that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added that Allāh will also say to the person, *"I have given you all My bounties as a gift (i.e. without a price)."* [*"At Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 4 p. 398*]

Allāh has granted every bounty to man without man earning them. Allāh can therefore question a person about how he used these bounties. Fortunate are those who engage in Allāh's Ibādah, are grateful to Him and constantly fear retribution from Allāh. On the other hand, most wretched are those who have every bounty and do not even think of submitting to Allāh.

Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Ibrahīm [*Surah 14, verse 34*], *"If you try to count Allāh 's bounties, you will never be able to do so. Indeed, man is extremely unjust and very ungrateful."* Man is extremely foolish. He humbles himself before people who give him things even though they may expect him to return the favour at some time. On the other hand, he refuses to humble himself before Allāh, Who grants him countless favours without asking anything in return. Man refuses to prostrate to Allāh and to fulfil His commands. Only Allāh gives one's good health and only He creates the cool water that slakes one's thirst.

NOTE: Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked them, *"Is there any of you who is able to recite a thousand verses of the Qur'ān daily?"* The prophet's companions *(Sahabah)*رضى الله عنهم replied, *"Who can have the strength to recite a thousand verses daily?* "Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *"Can you not recite 'Al Hākumut Takāthur' (Surah Takāthur)?"* This means that the reward for reciting Surah Takāthur equals the reward of reciting a thousand verses of the Qur'ān. [*"Mishkāt" p. 190*]

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سورة العصر

Makkan	Surah Asr	Verses 3

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the oath of time! (2) Verily man is at a loss... (3) .... except those who believe, who do good deeds, who encourage each other towards the truth and encourage each other to exercise patience.

Surah Asr encompasses man's failure and success in a nutshell. By taking an oath in the name of time, Allāh Ta'āla presents time as a witness to the fact that man in general is at a loss. He has to leave behind whatever he earns of this world and because he does not take a provision of good deeds to the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, he stands at a loss there. If man looks back in time and studies the history of past nations, it will become clear to him that most people have destroyed their lives in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. If a person lives his life properly, he will be successful in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. On the other hand, failure to do so will lead him to devastation in the Hereafter.

Because most people choose disbelief instead of belief, Allāh Ta'āla makes a general statement stating, *"Verily man is at a loss.* "Therefore, the entire species of mankind except the believers is at a loss. Describing this loss in Surah Zumar, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Verily the losers are those who put themselves and their families at a loss on the Day of Judgment. Behold! That is the evident loss."* Such people will themselves be in Hell and they will also lead their families into Hell. The toss of the disbelievers is the worst loss because they will lose everything they earned in this world when they die and will have no deeds to assist them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. They will be doomed forever because there will be no chance of returning to the world.

Making the exception from those at a loss, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"except those who believe, who do good deeds, who encourage each other towards the truth and encourage each other to exercise patience."* People with the above four attributes do not have to fear suffering any loss in the Hereafter. In addition to the two fundamental attributes of belief and good deeds, such people also encourage

others to carry out good deeds and to refrain from sins. Not only do they encourage their family and friends, but also their associates, co-travellers and people they meet. They encourage them to accept the truth and to tread the straight path.

In addition to this, they also encourage people to exercise patience. The word *"Sabr"* (translated above as *'Patience")* refers to remaining steadfast in performing good deeds, refraining from sin as well as exercising patience when afflicted with any difficulty. As explained in other verses (such as verse 153 of Surah Baqarah), the word *"Sabr"* entails all these three meanings. The believers described in this Surah also patiently endure the harassment of people whom they encourage *"towards the truth"*.

Every person needs to think whether he is leading a life in a manner that will cause him a loss or whether his way of life will lead him to salvation. People imbued with strong Belief are constantly concerned about their plight in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. They lose no opportunity to carry out good deeds and make every effort to avoid sin, especially the worst of sins viz. disbelief and polytheism. In this manner, they are always soaring to new heights in proximity to Allāh.

Unfortunately, there are many Muslims who neither seem to have any concern for their own salvation nor for the salvation of others. Of a person's 24-hour day, approximately eight hours are spent in earning a living, while another six are spent sleeping. Another two to three hours are spent in Salāh and other necessities. If the rest of the time is spent idly, it is wasted. If it is spent in sin, one will have to suffer grave consequences. A believer ought to be concerned about his Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* all the time. Many retired people who do not have to earn a living, while away their time in trivial pursuits without realising that they could make their time valuable by engaging in acts of Ibādah (*worship*) such as Salāh, Tilāwah (recitation) of the Qur'ān, remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*, teaching and propagating religion, etc. They could also be of invaluable assistance to religious organisations. If a person retires at about 50 or 65, he may still live for another 30 or 35 (or even more) years. To waste so much time in futile and Harām (*unlawful*) pastimes such as backbiting, watching television, playing cards, etc is extremely foolish. An intelligent person is one who uses his time profitably by engaging in good deeds and abstaining from sin.

The Surah makes it clear that it is not sufficient for a person to be concerned about his spiritual condition only. He has to ensure that others also practise religion, especially his family and subordinates. If he does not see to this, his wife, children and family will become a source of grief for him in the Hereafter. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made it clear that each person is a shepherd and will be questioned about his flock. [*Bukhari*]

It is most tragic to note that parents nowadays turn their children away from religion, teach them how to earn Harām (*unlawful*) wealth and send them to places where their belief is in jeopardy. This they regard as progress when it is actually the worst retrogression. May Allāh guide the Ummah. Āmīn.

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سورة الهمزة

Makkan	Surah Humaza	Verses 9

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ ﴿٢﴾ يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ ﴿٣﴾ كَلَّا لَيُنبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ﴿٥﴾ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَةُ ﴿٦﴾ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّؤْصَدَةٌ ﴿٨﴾ فِي عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ ﴿٩﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Destruction be for every person who searches for faults (in others) and who mocks... (2) . . . who amasses wealth and keeps meticulous count of it. (3) He thinks that his wealth will keep him alive forever. (4) Never! He will certainly be thrown into the "Thresher" (5) How will you know what the "Thresher" is? (6) (It is) Allāh's kindled fire... (7) . . . which penetrates the hearts. (8) It will certainly be locked over them... (9) ...in extended pillars.

The two words *"humaza"* and *"lumaza"* (translated above as a "person who searches for faults" and a person *"who mocks* "respectively), both refer to people who search for faults in other people, who backbite, who ridicule, who speak evil of others, who condemn others, who laugh at others and who poke fun at others either physically, verbally or by indications (such as winking). Referring to such people, Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Qalam, *"Do not obey every person who excessively swears on oath, who is disgraced, who searches for the faults of others, who excels in carrying tales.* "Condemning such actions in Surah Taubah Allāh says, *"Of them are those who ridicule you concerning charity."* Allāh emphatically states in Surah Hujurāt, *"Never find faults with yourselves."* [*Refer to the Tafsīr of Allāma Qurtubi* رحمة الله عليه *v. 10 Pgs. 181-184*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the above verses refer to Akhnas bin Sharīk, who used to mock people. Sayyidina Ibn Jurayj رحمة الله عليه states that the verses refer to Walīd bin Mughiera who used to speak ill of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in his presence and in his absence. A group of commentators are of the opinion that the verses refer to Ubay bin Khalaf while others mention that they refer to a person called Jamīl bin Āmir. Nevertheless, the verses clearly state that any person who engages in such evil deeds will be destroyed. People who attach no value to their salvation waste

their lives searching for faults in others so that they may publicise these.

Sayyidina Hudhayfa رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"One who carries tales shall not enter Heaven."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 411*]

Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Ghanam رضی الله عنه as well as Sayyidah Asma bint Yazīd رضی الله عنها narrate that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"The best servants of Allāh are those who remind you of Allāh when you see them. The worst servants of Allāh are those who carry tales, who cast enmity between friends and who desire that harm should come to those who stay away from evil."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 415*]

Once, while speaking to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها alluded towards the shortness of Sayyidah Safiyya رضی الله عنها [who was also one of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم wives]. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then told Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها that she had spoken a word which is so evil that it could contaminate the oceans. [*"Mishkāt" p. 414*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"That person cannot be a Mu'min (Believer) who mocks, who curses, who is vulgar and who carries out indecent acts."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 413*]

The discussion concerning the abomination of backbiting has been given in the commentary of verse 12 of Surah Hujurāt (*Surah 49*).

Recounting another evil practice of the person who searches for the faults of others, Allāh Ta'āla says that he also *"amasses wealth and keeps meticulous count of it."* This trait betrays the person's extreme love for material wealth. When a person is besotted with material wealth, he has no regard for Halāl (*lawful*) and Harām (*unlawful*) when earning. He will leave no stone unturned to make money even though he has to usurp the wealth of another person or forsake his Farā'idh (*abligations*) and Wājib (*Compulsory*) in the process. In addition to this, such a person regards material wealth as everything. Although he knows that he will have to die, he behaves as if his wealth will be of use to him forever. Referring to this behaviour, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"He thinks that his wealth will keep him alive forever."*

Allāh Ta'āla emphatically negates this false notion when He says, *"Never!"* Neither will the person live forever in this world nor will his wealth remain forever. Mentioning the plight of such a person, Allāh says, *"He will certainly be thrown into the 'Thresher'. How will you know what the 'Thresher' is? (It is) Allāh's kindled fire which penetrates the hearts."* The fire of Hell is so intense that it will not only burn the bodies of people but it will reach their hearts. Although this is sufficient to kill a person in this world, the people of Hell will not die.

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Whenever their skins melt away, We shall exchange them for fresh skins so that they may taste the torment."* A verse of Surah A 'la states, *"He (the person in Hell) will then neither die there nor live."*

Further describing the fire of Hell, Allāh says, *"It will certainly be locked over them in extended pillars."* The doors of Hell will be locked and they will have no escape. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has mentioned that the doors of Hell will be sealed with pillars. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله علیه has reported that the pillars refer to the yokes that will be placed on their necks so that they cannot

escape. Other commentators mention that the pillars refer to the large flames of Hell which will scorch the people there, making it impossible for them to escape.

NOTE: The phrase *"Allāh's kindled fire"* makes it clear that the fire of Hell has already been kindled and will be ready before people are thrown into it. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the fire of Hell was kindled for a thousand years until it became red. It was then kindled for another thousand years until it became white. It was then kindled for another thousand years until it became black. It is now black and dark. [*Tirmidhi*]

سورة الفيل

Makkan	Surah Fīl	Verses 5

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the people of the elephants? (2) Did He not lay their plans to waste... (3).... .and send against them flights of birds... (4) ... who pelted them with clay pebbles... (5) .. . making them look like eaten fodder?

The word *'fil"* is an Arabic adaptation of the Persian word *'pīl"*, meaning *"elephant"*. Because Arabic does not have a letter with a *"p"* sound, the closest equivalent is the *'f'* (called 'fā" in Arabic). Therefore, the word *'fil"* is used. The *'people of the elephants"* refers to a person called Abrahā and his army. Abrahā was appointed by the king of Abyssinia to act as the governor of Yemen. When he was appointed as governor, he decided to build a temple which would be an architectural masterpiece to be revered by one and all. He desired that the Arabs abandon the Ka'ba in Makkah and pay homage to this *"Yemeni Kābah"*. Consequently, he built a temple that was so tall that a person standing at the base was unable to see the top. He had the structure embellished with gold, silver and precious gems. He then made a proclamation that no one in Yemen should ever visit the Ka'ba in Makkah and that pilgrimage should now take place to his *"Ka'ba "*.

Although the Arabs were idol-worshippers, the love and reverence for the Ka'ba had permeated their hearts. Consequently, the Adnān, Qahtān and Quraysh tribes became extremely upset. One night, a member of the Mālik bin Kinanah tribe defecated in Abrahā's temple. When Abrahā learnt that it was a member of the Quraysh who did this, he swore to destroy their Ka'ba. When Abrahā sought permission from the king of Abyssinia, the king gave him his blessings and even sent his special elephant called Mahmūd. Mounted on this elephant, Abrahā marched with an army of elephants to destroy the Ka'ba. He

intended to raze the Ka'ba to the ground by fastening its pillars with iron chains tied to the elephants.

When the news of this planned attack on the Ka'bah spread, the Arabs prepared to defend the Ka'ba and raised a large army under the leadership of Dhu Nafar. However; Allāh Ta'āla did not desire that humans protect His Ka'ba. Therefore, Abrahā crushed this resistance and took Dhu Nafar prisoner. When Abrahā's army reached the settlement of the Banu Khath'am tribe, their leader Nufayl bin Habīb led his entire tribe against the army but they were also defeated. Nufayl was taken prisoner. Although Abrahā intended to have him executed, he later changed his mind, thinking that they could use him as a guide.

When the army reached Tā'if, the Banu Thaqīf tribe living there decided not to resist him because they had already heard about the fate of those who had previously resisted the mighty army. They also feared that if they oppose Abrahā, he would destroy the temple they had erected in the name of their idol Lāt. They therefore met with Abrahā and offered him the services of one of their leaders by the name of Abu Righāl. Abrahā accepted Abu Righāl's services as a guide and he led them towards Makkah. When the army reached a place called Maghmas, where the camels of the Quraysh grazed, Abrahā captured all the camels. Among these camels were two hundred camels belonging to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم s grandfather Abdul Muttalib.

From this place, Abrahā dispatched his messenger Hanāta Himyari to meet with the Quraysh leaders and to inform them that he did not intend fighting the people of Makkah. He made it clear that none of the residents of Makkah would be harmed if they did not oppose him in his objective of destroying the Ka'ba. When Hanāta arrived in Makkah, everyone pointed him in the direction of Abdul Muttalib because he was regarded to be the most senior leader. When Hanāta conveyed Abrahā's message, Abdul Muttalib told him that they had no intentions of opposing Abrahā because they did not have the might. However, he made it clear that the Ka'ba is Allāh's house which Allāh's friend Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had built. He told Hanāta that Allāh would protect the Ka'ba and that they could proceed with their plans if they were prepared to fight Allāh. Hanāta then insisted that Abdul Muttalib accompany him to meet Abrahā.

When Abrahā saw the handsome countenance of Abdul Muttalib, he descended from his throne and sat with Abdul Muttalib on the ground. Speaking through a translator, Abrahā asked Abdul Muttalib why he had come. Abdul Muttalib said that he had come for his camels which Abrahā's soldiers had captured. Abrahā said to Abdul Muttalib, *"When I set my eyes on you, I had tremendous respect for you. However, I have lost all this respect now that you speak of your mere 200 camels knowing that I have come here to destroy your Ka'ba. You have said nothing about this.* "Abdul Muttalib said, *"I am the owner of the camels and am concerned about them. I am not the owner of Allāh's house. The Master of the house knows how to protect His house.*

Abrahā said, *"Your God cannot protect it from me." Then you do as you please,"* said Abdul Muttalib. According to certain narrations, some other leaders of the Quraysh were with Abdul Muttalib at that time. They proposed to Abrahā that if he left the Ka'ba to be, the entire Tihāma region would pay him a third of their

crops annually. However, he refused this offer. He then returned Abdul Muttalib's camels to him. Taking his camels along with him, Abdul Muttalib returned to Makkah.

When he entered Makkah, he proceeded straight to the Ka'ba and, holding the ring of the door, he made supplication to Allāh. A large group of the Quraysh joined him in the supplication in which they entreated Allāh Ta'āla to protect the Ka'ba because they did not have the strength to resist Abrahā's powerful army. After having supplicated to Allāh in all sincerity, Abdul Muttalib took all the people of Makkah to the neighbouring mountains because they were convinced that Allāh's punishment would seize Abrahā and his army.

The next morning, Abrahā prepared the army to march into Makkah. Nufayl bin Habīb, whom Abrahā had taken prisoner earlier, took hold of the ear of Abrahā's elephant Mahmūd. He said to the elephant, *"Return safely whence you came from because you are in Allāh's sacred city."* Upon hearing this, the elephant immediately sat down. Try as they might, the elephant's minders could not get him to stand. They even tried beating him with large iron spears and putting iron arrowheads in his trunk. However, he still would not walk towards Makkah. When they steered him in the direction of Yemen, he was prepared to walk. He was prepared to walk in every other direction besides the direction of the Ka'ba. It was then that the army saw many flights of little birds approaching from the coast. Each bird carried three little pebbles the size of the gram seed or (according to other narrations) the size of lentils. Each bird carried one in its beak and one in each claw.

Wāqidi رحمة الله عليه narrates that the birds (referred to as Abābīl) looked strange and had never been seen before. They were the size of pigeons with red claws. Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyab رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the birds were green with yellow beaks. Sayyidina Ikrima رضى الله عنه narrates that the birds emerged from the ocean and had heads resembling animals. As the birds flew over Abrahā's army, they dropped their pebbles which pecked more power than a bullet. They went straight through anything they struck and settled deep in the ground. Seeing this punishment, the elephants all dispersed and all but one were unharmed. All Abrahā's soldiers did not die immediately. Those who escaped died painful deaths as they tried to make their way back to Yemen. Allāh 'Ta'āla had sent little birds with little pebbles to destroy an army that many Arab tribes could not resist. On that occasion, Abrahā was afflicted with a horrible disease. A poison permeated his body and caused every joint to decay. By the time he was brought back to Yemen, his body was in pieces. He died there. Two of Mahmūd's keepers settled in Makkah but both became blind and paralysed. They were often seen begging from people. [*The Tafsīr of Allāma Ibn Kathīr* رحمة الله عليه *v. 4 p. 549 and "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p. 525*]

This incident was witnessed by many people and it became a momentous event in Arab history. When referring to any event during that year, the Arabs would say that it happened in the year of the elephants. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was born in the same year, fifty days after the people of the elephants were destroyed. Because everyone was acquainted with the incident, Allāh Ta'āla speaks of the incident without introduction when He says, *"Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the people of the elephants?"* Allāh Ta'āla reminds the

people of Makkah that He had been merciful to them when He protected the Ka'ba which had given them respect among the Arabs. In this way, Allāh preserved their honour and esteem. Allāh asks them *"Did He not lay their plans to waste and send against them flights of birds who pelted them with clay pebbles, making them look like eaten fodder?" It* is the same Allāh who sent His final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to the people of Makkah, thereby increasing their honour and the honour of the Ka'ba. It was therefore necessary for the people of Makkah to be grateful to Allāh for all these bounties.

Commentators mention that any miraculous event that took place before the coming of a Nabi عليه السلام is called *"Irhās"*. A miraculous event that took place after the coming of a Nabi عليه السلام is called *"Mu'jiza"*. The incident of the elephants is therefore regarded as an *"Irhās"* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The incident was a sign to indicate that a notable personality will soon appear in the city of Makkah who will have a special attachment with the Ka'ba.

NOTE: The fact that Allāh Ta'āla sent many flights of birds indicates that Abrahā's army was very large. While there were many soldiers, there were only eight to twelve elephants. Although swallows are usually referred to as *"Abābīl"*, they are not implied in the verse. As explained earlier, these birds were a type that appeared most strange.

The word *"sijjīl"* (translated above as *"clay pebbles*) is the Arabic version of the two Persian words *"sangh"* (stone) and *"gill"* (clay). They therefore refer to clay rolled into little balls and then baked to harden. These were the same type of pebbles used to destroy the nation of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. These pebbles are neither as heavy nor as hard as stones broken off mountains. It is only by the power of Allāh that these stones could have had the devastating effect they did.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه narrates from Abu Sālih رحمة الله عليه that he saw some of these pebbles in the house of Sayyidah Umm Hāni رضى الله عنها the daughter of Abu Tālib. He says that they were black in colour with red stripes across them. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that tiny pimples developed on the parts of the bodies that the pebbles struck and that this was the beginning of small-pox. Allāh knows best.

سورة القريش

Makkan	Surah Quraysh	Verses 4

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Because of the familiarity of the Quraysh. (2) .... their familiarity with travelling in winter and summer... (3) ...they ought to worship the Lord of this House... (4) ... Who fed them in their hunger and gave them safety from fear.

Allāh Ta'āla commanded His Khalīl (friend) Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to reconstruct the Ka'ba in Makkah. The Hajj (pilgrimage) to the Ka'ba had been taking place long before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came into the world. Because the Quraysh lived in Makkah where the Ka'ba was situated, the Arabs held them in high esteem even though they were polytheists. Everyone regarded the Ka'ba to be *"Baytullāh"* i.e. the house of Allāh. Although the Arabs were accustomed to looting and fighting each other, no one ever attacked the people of Makkah because they lived around the Ka'ba. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Ankabūt, *"Do they not see that We have made the Haram peaceful, whereas people are being ravaged around them? Do they believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for Allāh 's bounties?"* [*Surah 29, verse 67*]

When the people of the elephants were destroyed and the incident became popular, the Arabs began to have even more reverence for the people of Makkah. Even the people of other areas began to respect them.

Makkah is a barren area. The ground is covered in rocks, water is scarce and so is vegetation. There are barely any means of survival there. From ancient times, the people of Makkah travelled to Shām in the north and Yemen in the south to get what they needed. Their caravans annually made a winter trip to Yemen and a summer trip to Shām. From there they used to bring some foods and other articles which they sold. In fact, the famous incident when the Roman Emperor Heraclius questioned Sayyidina Abu Sufyan رضى الله عنه about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took place when the latter was on one of these journeys.

Allāh Ta'āla had therefore made these trade journeys of the Quraysh a

means by which their clothing and food requirements were met. At the same time, their safety was ensured by the presence of the Ka'ba. It is for this reason that Surah Quraysh follows Surah Fīl. Allāh Ta'āla reminds the Quraysh that He had ensured the safety of the Ka'ba by sending the birds to destroy the army of Abrahā. By doing this, the safety of the Quraysh was also ensured because people respected them for their relationship with the Ka'ba. As a result, the Quraysh were free to travel anywhere in Arabia without fear of being waylaid or looted. As they travelled to Shām and Yemen, none would lay a hand on them because of the respect they had for them. It was therefore easy for them to transport to Makkah whatever they needed. Allāh reminds them of these favours so that they realise that they have to be grateful to Allāh and that *"they ought to worship the Lord of this House Who fed them in their hunger and gave them safety from fear."* To worship other beings while enjoying all the bounties of Allāh is an act of extreme ingratitude.

NOTE: The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم belonged to the Banu Hāshim clan, which was an offshoot of the Quraysh tribe. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم grandfather was known by the title of Abdul Muttalib although his name was Shayba. His father was Amr bin Abd Manāf, whose title was Hāshim. It is for this reason that his clan became known as the Banu Hāshim (the children of Hāshim). The name of Amr bin Abd Manāf's father (i.e. Abd Manāf) was Mughiera bin Qusay. After him, the lineage is as follows: the son of Kilāb, the son of Murrah, the son of Ka'b, the son of Luway, the son of Ghālib, the son of Fahar, the son of Mālik, the son of Nadhar, the son of Kināna.

While some Scholars mention that Quraysh was the title of Fahar bin Mālik (Fahar the son of Mālik), other Scholars state that it was definitely the title of Nadhar bin Kināna (Nadhar the son of Kināna). In his book *"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya"*, Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has mentioned the proofs for each opinion, but has preferred the second opinion and has also quoted an authentic hadith in support of this opinion. Therefore, the lineage of Nadhar bin Kināna are called the Quraysh.

Some Scholars state that the word Quraysh is the diminutive form of the word *"Qarsh"*. When Sayyidina Mu'āwiya رضى الله عنه asked Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه the meaning of the word Quraysh, he replied that it is the name of a powerful sea creature which eats all other large and small creatures in the sea. The Quraysh were called by this name because they were a powerful tribe who overpowered other tribes. The word also conveys the meaning of unity. It is therefore said that because Qusay bin Kilāb was the first person to unite various tribes to live in the Haram, he was given this title. According to others, the word Quraysh refers to earning a living by trade. The Quraysh received this title because trade was their occupation.

The word Quraysh also has the meaning of *'each"*. It is recorded that Nadhar bin Kinānah used to search for the poor and assist them. During, the Hajj season, he and his sons used to search for the needy and give them so much wealth that it lasted them until they reached their homes. It for this reason that the tribe

received the title of Quraysh. Allāh knows best.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his cousins Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ja'far رضى الله عنه, as well as their uncles Sayyidina Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Aqīl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه all belonged to the Banu Hāshim clan. Although Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه did not belong to the Banu Hāshim clan, they all belonged to the Quraysh.

Sayyidina Wāthila bin Asqa رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, *"Verily Allāh selected Kināna from the progeny of Sayyidina Ismā'īl عليه السلام and selected Quraysh from the offspring of Kināna. From the Quraysh, Allāh selected the Banu Hāshim and then selected me from the Banu Hāshim."* [*Muslim*]

The Quraysh did not accept Islām for a long while after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم started propagating the message. They persecuted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and forced him to leave Makkah. However, Allāh guided them to accept Islām and they rendered great services to Islām, planting the banner of Islām in the lands of great empires. Among the great generals of the Quraysh to accept Islām were Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه.

The *"Sunan"* of Abu Dawūd Tayālisi رحمة الله عليه quotes a supplication of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in which he supplicated to Allāh saying, *"O Allāh! You had made the early members of the Quraysh taste punishment and calamities, now grant prosperity to the latter generation."* Allāh accepted this supplication and granted great favours to the Quraysh together with using them for tremendous services to religion.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that Caliph should remain within the ranks of the Quraysh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned that as long as the Quraysh are steadfast upon the truth, Allāh will disgrace those who harbour enmity for them. In another hadith, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the Religion of Islām shall remain dominant under the leadership of twelve Khalifas (*Caliphs*), all of them from the Quraysh.

Caliph ought to have remained within the Ummah, but monarchy and now democracy have crept into the Ummah, causing their downfall. Unfortunately, nowadays many so-called Muslims are claiming leadership of the Muslims. Although they attach titles of Qurayshi, Siddīqi, Uthmāni, Alawi, etc to their names, these are restricted to names because it is very difficult to detect any trace of Islām in them. Neither do they look like Muslims nor do they behave like Muslims. When they have lost their identities as Muslims, they cannot hope to command respect among the Muslims. What can be expected when such people lead the Muslims who bow to every command of their disbelievers mentors? May Allāh guide the Ummah. Āmīn.

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سورة الماعون

Makkan	Surah Mā'ūn	Verses 7

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَرَءَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ ﴿1﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ الَّذِي يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿2﴾ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ ﴿3﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿4﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿5﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ ﴿6﴾ وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ ﴿7﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) Have you not seen the person who denies the Day of Reckoning? (2) It is he who pushes the orphan away and... (3) ...who does not encourage feeding of the poor. (4) Destruction be for those worshippers who neglect their Salāh... (5) ... those who are ostentatious... (6) .... and who refuse even minor articles.

The Arabic word *"mā'ūn"* (translated above as *"minor articles "*) refers to things that are insignificant and which will barely decrease a person's wealth if he gives them away to others. This Surah condemns six things, each one contained in each of the six verses.

Allāh begins by saying, *"Have you not seen the person who denies the Day of Reckoning?"* The first thing that Allāh condemns in the Surah is denying the advent of resurrection and Judgment day. Of course, a person who denies Judgment day is a disbeliever.

Allāh continues, *"It is he who pushes the orphan away and who does not encourage feeding of the poor."* This verse describes the extreme miserliness of the person who denies Judgment day. Not only is he too miserly to spend on the needy, but he does not even encourage others to do the same. Neither does he have mercy on orphans nor on the poor. This verse tells us that harsh and merciless behaviour can be a trait of only a disbeliever. A believer is endowed with a compassionate heart. He takes pity on the needy and is convinced that assisting them will have its rewards in the Hereafter. If a disbeliever has to render assistance to the needy, his deed is not to please Allāh and he has no expectation of reward in the Hereafter. In Surah Al-Hāqqah, Allāh Ta'āla describes a disbeliever who will suffer in Hell. Allāh says, *"Verily he never believed in the Majestic Allāh and he never encouraged feeding the poor."* [*Surah 69, verse 33,34*]

After describing three traits of the disbelievers, Allāh Ta'āla mentions three traits of those people who claim to be Muslims but who do not practise religion properly. These people include the hypocrites as well as sincere believers who are lacking in the practical application of Islām in their lives. Allāh says, *"Destruction be for those worshippers who neglect their Salāh; those who are ostentatious and who refuse even minor article."*

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمه الله عليه writes that *"those worshippers who neglect their Salāh"* refers to all the following categories of people:

- *Those who do not perform their Salāh at all.*
- *Those who are unaware of the times of salā h and perform their salāh at the incorrect times.*
- *Those who perform their salāh without observing the conditions and fundamentals of Salāh.*
- *Those who are not attentive in their salāh.*

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمه الله عليه writes further that those who have any number of these traits in them shall be deserving of the condemnation in proportion to the number of traits found in them. However, the person who has all these traits in him shall be deserving of the full force of the condemnation of this verse. Such a person possesses all the traits of a Munāfiq *(a hypocrite)* even though he may not be one at heart. Bukhari and Muslim report a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the Salāh of a Munāfiq is that he waits until the sun is between the horns of Satan before he hastily stands up for (the Asr) Salāh and pecks at the ground four times. In such a Salāh he hardly thinks of Allāh at all.

Allāh Ta'āla also mentions that such people perform Salāh for show. There are many such people who have no true concern for their Salāh but merely perform their Salāh because they fear that others may think ill of them if they neglect their Salāh. They therefore perform Salāh only to show others. Condemning this behaviour of the hypocrites in Surah Nisā, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Indeed the hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh whereas He deceives them. When they stand up in Salāh, they stand up lazily, to be seen by people and they remember Allāh only a little therein."* [*Surah 4, verse 142*]

A person who has faith in Allāh and in His promises will perform his Salāh scrupulously. It will make no difference to him whether he performs Salāh in public or in private. In either case, the Salāh will be meticulous. He will not regard humans as beings worthy of pleasing through Ibādah (*worship*). He will perform Tahajjud Salāh (*supererogatory prayer*) sincerely without making statements like, *"It was really freezing cold this morning when I got up for Tahajjud."* Just as some people boast about their physical acts of worship, there are many people who insist that a plaque with their names should be displayed on mosques or classrooms that they sponsor. Others insist that honorary titles should be attached to their names whenever their names are taken. There are also others who donate to people and then remind the recipients of their favour, thereby causing them hurt. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"O you who believe!*

Render not your charity in vain by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen by people and believes not in Allāh nor in the Last Day. His similitude is like that of a rock on which there is some sand. Smitten by a rainstorm, it is left bare. They have no control of anything which they earn, and Allāh does not guide the disbelieving folk." [*Surah 2, verse 264*]

One should bear in mind that the joy that enters one's heart after carrying out a good deed is not ostentation. Similarly, carrying out a good deed in front of people does not necessarily entail ostentation. Ostentation is a condition of the heart which spurs one to do something so that people may think highly of one and praise one. Foolish are those people whom Satan has fooled into believing that they should not perform Salāh with Jamā'ah (*congregation*) because it is a public act and public acts denote ostentation. An act done publicly will be regarded as ostentation only when one's purpose is to promote one's image. If one intends only to please Allāh, the act may be private or public. Of course, a good deed carried out privately is better. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Baqarah [*Surah 2, verse 271*], *"If you make your charity apparent, then this is good, but if you secretly give it to the poor, it will be better for you and atone for some of your sins. Allāh is Informed of what you do."* The fact that this verse describes giving charity publicly as *"good"* means that no harm is done by doing so, as long as one is sincere.

The third trait of some people that Allāh condemns is that they *"refuse even minor articles."* These articles (*"mā'ūn "*) are such that allowing others to use them will neither cause one loss nor harm, nor will the article itself be tainted. When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه was asked what these articles were, he replied that they were those things that people usually borrowed from each other like hammers, pots, buckets, scales, etc. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه also described *"Mā'ūn"* as articles used domestically. Sayyidina Ikrima رحمة الله عليه gave examples of *"Mā'ūn"* as strainers, buckets and needles. Other commentators have interpreted *"refuse even minor articles"* to mean that these people refuse to pay the obligatory Zakāh.

Because the Salāh performed for show is not a Salāh for Allāh, performing such a Salāh denotes an act of miserliness towards Allāh, Who deserves much better. After mentioning this miserliness in one's Ibādah (*worship*), Allāh speaks about miserliness with one's wealth when He condemns those people who *"refuse even minor articles."* If a person refuses to lend articles to others which will cause no loss to him whatsoever, how can such a person be expected to part with other things?

Failure to pay Zakāh is also a terrible act of miserliness because Allāh is instructing one to part with only one fortieth (2.5%) of one's wealth after having it with one for an entire year. Expressing reluctance and delaying in giving something minor to someone is tantamount to not giving at all. Minor acts like giving a matchstick to someone to light a stove or lending someone a Qur'ān or a mat for Salāh will earn one great rewards and refusing these things will be a source of tremendous deprivation even though one will lose nothing. It is indeed tragic that there are some people who are extremely miserly and who would refuse even such insignificant things.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what things may not be refused. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Water, salt and fire." Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها said, *"We understand (people's need for) water. What about fire and salt?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The person who gives fire will receive the reward of giving in charity everything that the fire cooks and the person who gives salt will receive the rewards of giving in charity all the food that the salt gives flavour to. The person who gives a believer a sip of water in a place where water is available is like one who frees a slave. The person who gives a Mu'min (*Believer*) a sip of water in a place where water is not available is like one who has given life to a person." [*"Mishkāt" p. 260*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "Smiling with your Muslim brother is Sadaqa (charity). Enjoining good is Sadaqa (*charity*), forbidding evil is Sadaqa (*charity*), guiding a lost person is Sadaqa (*charity*), assisting a person with weak eyesight is Sadaqa (*charity*), removing a stone, thorn or bone from the road is Sadaqa (*charity*) and pouring water from your bucket into your brother's bucket is also Sadaqa *(charity)*." [*"Mishkāt" p. 169 from Tirmidhi*]

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Verily We have granted you abundant good. (2) So perform Salāh for your Lord and sacrifice. (3) Indeed it is your enemy who shall be unknown.

While some commentators state that Surah Kowthar was revealed after the Hijrah (i.e. it is a Madani Surah), others say that it was revealed before the Hijrah (*migration*) (making it a Makki Surah). This Surah has the fewest number of verses in the Qur'ān. The Arabic word *"Kowthar"* is translated as *"abundant good"* and also refers to the pond of Kowthar which will be given exclusively to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on the Day of Judgment. Commentators have quoted several narrations concerning the reason for which this Surah was revealed. These will be quoted after the commentary of the verses, *Insha Allāh*.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh Ta'āla states, *"Verily We have granted you abundant good."* The *abundant good"* that Allāh Ta'āla gave the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم includes Prophethood, being the best of all the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم, the Qur'ān, the largest Ummah, a Religion that has spread throughout the world and the high mantle of Maqām Mahmūd in the Hereafter. The pond of Kowthar is a part of this *"abundant good"*. This *abundant good"* is not restricted to these things and there are numerous other bounties besides the above.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that when he was walking in Heaven, he saw a river, at both ends of which stood domes of hollow pearl. When he asked Jibrīl عليه السلام what this was, the reply was that it was the river of Kowthar that Allāh had granted to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says that when he looked closer, he saw that the bed of the river was pure fragrant musk. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 974*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that travelling from one end to the other of the pond of Kowthar is a

month's journey and all the sides are of equal length. The water is whiter than milk, more fragrant than musk and has as many cups as the number of stars in the sky. Whoever drinks from there shall never be thirsty again. [*"Mishkāt" p. 487 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"My pond shall be so large that the distance between two ends is longer than the distance between Īla and Aden. Its water is whiter than snow, sweeter than milk mixed with honey and it will have more cups than the stars in the sky. I shall have to turn away the people of other Ummahs just as a person turns away the camels of other people from the drinking place of his camels."* The prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم enquired, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Will you be able to recognise us on the Day of Judgment?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"I shall certainly be able to recognise you because you will have a sign that no other Ummah will have. You will come to me at the pond with your faces, hands and feet shining with the effect of wudhu."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 487 from Muslim*]

According to another narration, the pond will have as many gold and silver cups as the stars in the sky. [*"Mishkāt" p. 487 from Muslim*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned that two channels from Heaven flow into the pond of Kowthar, augmenting its water supply. The one channel is of gold and the other of silver.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the pond of Kowthar is larger than the distance between Aden and Amman . Its water is cooler than ice, sweeter than honey and more fragrant than musk. It will have more cups than the number of stars in the sky and the person who drinks once from the pond will never get thirsty ever again. The first to come there for water will be the poor immigrants. When someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for a description of these people, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"They are those whose hair is dishevelled, whose faces are pale (because of hunger and hardship), for whom doors (of rulers and the rich) do not open and to whom women of high birth are not given in marriage. Their behaviour with people is so excellent that they fulfil every right that they owe to others while they do not demand the rights that others owe to them (i.e. they forgo many of these)."*

This hadith describes the poor Immigrants as people who could not afford to smarten themselves and who did not really care to do so because they disliked wasting time in this. They concentrated their efforts in preparing rather for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* instead of for this world. They were so overcome with hardships in this world, that they were physically affected and their faces had become pale. People looked down on them and did not invite them for functions. In fact, the rich and upper-class would not even let them into their homes or marry their daughters to them. However, these people will be extremely honoured on the Day of Judgment when they will be the first to drink from the hand of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم at the pond of Kowthar.

When the Khalifa *(caliph)* Sayyidina Umar bin Abdul Azīz رحمة الله عليه heard that the first people to drink from the pond of Kowthar will be those with dishevelled hair, dirty clothing, who are not married to women of high birth and for whom doors are not opened, he became extremely distressed. He said, *"Alas!*

I am not like this. I am married to (Princess) Fātima the daughter of Abdul Malik and doors are opened for me. Now I will make sure that I shall not wash my hair until it becomes dishevelled and I shall not bath until my body becomes dirty." ["At Targhīb wat Tarhīb"]

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "I shall be waiting to give people water from the pond of Kowthar. Whoever will pass by me shall drink from it and whoever drinks from it shall never be thirsty again. Many people shall pass by me whom I will recognise and who will recognise me. However, a barrier will be cast between us. I shall say, *'This person was from us. 'It will be said to me, 'You do not know what innovations this person had introduced (in Religion) after you.' I will then say, 'Go away! Go away all those who changed my Religion after me. "'* [*"At Targhīb wat Tarhīb"*]

The condition of such a person will be tragic indeed. Suffering severe thirst on the Day of Judgment, he will reach the pond of Kowthar only to have the angels shove him away and to have the *"Mercy of the universe"* tell him to go away. Following the teachings of the Qur'ān and that Ahadīth is the only avenue for a Muslim's salvation. It is tragic that people have introduced thousands of new practices into Religion and have corrupted it. When they are advised against this, they take offence and speak ill of the one giving them good advice. They should understand that one should do whatever the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم told us to do and in the manner that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did it. One should not do things as one pleases. When we are told that a certain act will earn one great rewards, we should verify whether it is so and ask for references.

After recounting His great bounties on the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, Allāh Ta'āla instructs, *"So perform Salāh for your Lord and sacrifice."* This command includes all types of Salāh, be they Obligatory, Compulsory, Sunnah or Mustahab (*preferable*). The second command is to sacrifice animals in the name of Allāh. This verse is actually a command to express gratitude for all the favours that Allāh Ta'āla has given one. Salāh is the greatest form of physical Ibādah (*worship*) and sacrificing an animal in the name of Allāh is really a Jihād against the practices of the idolaters who sacrifice animals in the names of their idols. Although the address is to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, the verse applies to every Muslim.

The Arabic word *"nahr"* (translated above as *"sacrifice")* actually refers to slaughtering a camel, which is regarded to be the best animal to sacrifice. Of course, it is permissible to slaughter cows, sheep, goats, etc during the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhil Hijjah. The addition of the clause *'for your Lord"* denotes that a person's Salāh and sacrifice should be solely for Allāh's pleasure. Those people are incorrect who, quoting Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه, translate the word *"nahr"* as placing the hands on the chest. [*Ibn Kathīr v. 4 p. 558*]

Allāh concludes the Surah by telling the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, *"Indeed it is your enemy who shall be unknown."* The books of Tafsīr (*exegesis*) state that one of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم staunch enemies Ās bin Wā'il used to tell people not to bother with the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم because after he passes away, there shall be none to take his name because he had no male offspring. Allāh Ta'āla revealed the verse to tell him that while the Holy Prophet's صلی الله علیه وسلم

name will echo throughout the world, he (Ās bin Wā'il) will be someone unknown.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that Ka'b bin Ashraf, one of the wealthy leaders of the Jews of Madinah once visited Makkah. When the polytheists of Makkah asked him whether their idolatry was better than the Religion taught by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he told them that their idolatry was better. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

It has also been reported that the verse was revealed when one of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sons passed away and Abu Lahab told the polytheists that they had nothing to fear from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because his lineage has been severed.

These unfortunate people thought that a person will be remembered in this world only if he has male offspring to bear his name. However, Allāh Ta'āla has exalted the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name. Allāh Ta'āla took him to the heavens where he became famous and Allāh gave him millions of followers who constantly take his name. His name is taken during every Adhān and Iqāmah and besides the salutations (Durūd) sent upon him during every person's Ṣalāh, millions of people recite Durūd when not performing Ṣalāh.

In fact, even non-Muslims speak favourably of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم up to this day. Hundreds of thousands of people have proceeded through the lineage of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم daughter Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها and many thousands are alive today. On the other hand, none cares to mention the names of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم enemies who said that he would soon become unknown. They have left this world and the strings of their lineages have also been severed.

سورة الكفرون

Makkan	Surah Kāfirūn	Verses 6

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿1﴾ لَآ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿2﴾ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ ﴿3﴾ وَلَآ أَنَا۠ عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ ﴿4﴾ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ ﴿5﴾ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِىَ دِينِ ﴿6﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Say, "O disbelievers!" (2) "I do not worship what you worship... (3)..nor do you worship what I worship." (4) "Neither am I a worshipper of that which you worship... (5) ..nor are you worshippers of that which I worship." (6) "For you is your religion and for me is mine.

Before the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the people of Makkah were idolaters and had even placed idols in the Ka'ba. They had great respect for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and used to call him *"As Sādiqul Amīn"* (*"The Truthful and Trustworthy'*). However, when he started stopping them from idolatry, they became his arch-enemies and began labelling him.

Once, four of the polytheists approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with a proposition. These four were Walīd bin Mughiera, Ās bin Wā'il, Aswad bin Muttalib and Ubay bin Khalaf. They proposed a compromise to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, saying that they would worship his Allāh if he worshipped their idols. In this way, they said, his and their religion would be one and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would be able to benefit from them. According to another narration, some of the most evil members of the Quraysh told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should worship their idols for a year and they would worship Allāh for a year. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم responded by saying, *"I seek Allāh 's refuge from worshipping anyone besides Him."* They then said that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم at least kissed one of their idols, they were prepared to believe in him and would worship Allāh.

It was then that Allāh revealed Surah Kāfirūn. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proceeded to the Haram and loudly recited the Surah to the Quraysh gathered there. The polytheists then lost all hope of compromising with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and realised that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would

never worship their idols. ["Ruhul Ma'āni"]

Because the second and third verses have the same meaning as the fourth and fifth verses, Scholars have mentioned that the fourth and fifth verses serve as emphasis. However, others mention that because the grammatical structure of the second and third verses (being *'fi'liyya"* sentences) indicate that the action is confined to the present tense, the (second and third) verses mean that at present, I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship. On the other hand, the grammatical structure of the fourth and fifth verses (being *"ismiyya"* sentences) have no time constraints. The actions may therefore be assumed to refer to the future. As a result, the (fourth and fifth) verses mean that (in future) I will not worship what you worship and you will not worship what I worship.

This interpretation prompts the question that if it is said that the disbelievers will not worship Allāh, what about the many thousands of them who accepted Islām after the Surah was revealed? How can they be Muslims when the Qur'ān tells them that they will never worship Allāh? Scholars reply to this question by saying that the verse tells the disbelievers that they will never worship what the Muslims worship if they remain disbelievers. However, if they accept Islām, they will obviously be worshipping Allāh.

Allāh Ta'āla concludes the Surah by stating that the disbelievers should be told, *"For you is your religion and for me is mine."* Commentators state that this verse summarises the message of the Surah, serving as emphasis. The Islām of the Muslims is based on Oneness of Allah while the religion of the disbelievers is based on the antithesis of Oneness of Allah i.e. on disbelief and polytheism. The two are therefore irreconcilable. In addition to this, each party is staunch in their respective religions. As a result, neither will worship the deity of the other.

Other commentators have interpreted the verse as: *"O disbelievers! The message of the truth has reached you and the path to salvation has been outlined. If you do not want to accept, then do not try to veer me off the path."*

A third interpretation is: *"O disbelievers! Every person will see the fruit of his beliefs and deeds. While you shall suffer the consequences of your disbelief, we (Muslims) shall be amply rewarded for our belief in Oneness of Allah and our adherence to the commands of Allāh. You people wish to make us suffer the same punishment you are destined to suffer by inviting us to accept your religion. I will not barter my salvation for punishment."*

Some commentators have mentioned that Surah Kāfirūn has been abrogated because it outlaws entering into a treaty with the disbelievers, an act which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself did when he entered into a treaty with the Jews of Madinah and the polytheists of Makkah afterwards. However, this interpretation is unnecessary because Surah Kāfirūn outlaws only those treaties that require Muslims to denounce Islām or that require them to violate the laws of the Shari'ah. The Surah does not refer to treaties that do not entail these evils. Treaties that conform with the injunctions of the Shari'ah are permissible.

NOTE: Certain sects claim to be Muslims despite holding beliefs that remove them from the fold of Islām. When they are advised to

return to the correct teachings of the Qur'ān and the Aḥadīth, they excuse themselves by saying, *"For you is your religion and for me is mine."* Such people misconstrue this verse to mean that every person is at liberty to adopt the beliefs and practices he wishes. The Surah clearly addresses the disbelievers, making it clear that their religion is irreconcilable with Islām. No beliefs can be entertained which contradict the teachings of the Qur'ān and the clear Ahadīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because these will remove a person from the fold of Islām. The leaders of these sects have beguiled their followers into adopting this attitude of *"Do as you please and we will do as we please."*

THE VIRTUES OF SURAH KĀFIRŪN

The Ahadīth cite numerous virtues for reciting Surah Kāfirūn. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Surah Zilzāl equals half the Qur'ān, Surah Ikhlās (*Surah 112*) equals a third of the Qur'ān and Surah Kāfirūn (*Surah 109*) equals a quarter of the Qur'ān. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite Surah Kāfirūn and Surah Ikhlās (*Surah 112*) respectively in the first two Rakāhs of the Sunnah of Fajr. [*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited Surah Kāfirūn and Surah Ikhlās (*Surah 112*) in the Maghrib Salāh. [*Ibn Majah*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه has mentioned that he cannot count the times when he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recite Surah Kāfirūn and Surah Ikhlās in the two Rakāhs after Maghrib and the two Rakāh before Fajr. [*All the above Ahadīth are reported in "Mishkāt" p. 80*]

Sayyidina Farwa bin Naufal رضى الله عنه narrates that his father asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for something to recite when he lay down on his bed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to recite Surah Kāfirūn because it declares one's exoneration from polytheism. [*Tirmidhi, Abu Dawūd and Dārmi*]

Other Ahadīth state that Surah Kāfirūn should be the last words on a person's lips before he sleeps at night. [*Abu Dawūd*]

سورة النصر

Madinan	Surah Nasr	Verses 3

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) When Allāh's help and victory come... (2) ... and you see people entering the Religion of Allāh in droves... (3) .... then glorify the praises of your Lord and seek forgiveness from Him. Without doubt, He is the Greatest Acceptor of repentance.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this Surah, Allāh Ta'āla says, *"When Allāh's help and victory come and you see people entering the Religion of Allāh in droves, then glorify' the praises of your Lord and seek forgiveness from Him. Without doubt, He is the Greatest Acceptor of repentance."* Glorifying Allāh's praises may be accomplished by reciting *"Subhā Nallāh Wal Hamdu Lillāh"* ("Glory be to Allāh and all praises are for Allāh").

Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always engaged in Tasbīh (glorifying Allāh), Tahmīd (praising Allāh) and Istighfār (seeking Allāh's forgiveness), the emphasis laid in this Surah prompted him to increase in these. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that during the end of his life the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم abundantly recited:

'Subhā Nallāhi wa Bi Hamdihi Astaghfirullāh wa Atūbu Ilay" [Ibn Kathīr]

Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها narrates that towards the end of his life, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited *"Subhā Nallāhi wa Bi Hamdihi"* in every posture. When she asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the reason for this, he replied that he had been instructed to do so. He then recited the entire Surah Nasr. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

Commentators are unanimous that the *"victory"* in this verse refers to the conquest of Makkah. Surah Nasr was revealed two years before the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم demise. When the Surah was revealed, The Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم called Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها and said to her that Allāh Ta'āla had informed him that his demise was close. When she started to weep, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم consoled her by telling her that she would be the first of his family members to meet him. She then began to smile. [*Bayhaqi v. 4 p. 561*]

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه used to allow Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه to sit with him in the gathering of the veterans of the battle of Badr. Some of them disliked that the young Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه sit with them because they had sons of his age who were not allowed to sit there. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was aware of this reservation. One day, he asked those present what the message of Surah Nasr was. While some of them remained silent, others mentioned that it was a command to engage in Allāh's glorification and Istighfār when Allāh's assistance came and when the Muslims conquered foreign territories. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه then asked Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه if this was the message. When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه replied in the negative, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه asked him what the message was. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه told them that the Surah conveyed the message of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم imminent demise. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه mentioned that he had understood the same message. [*Bukhari*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself more greatly in Tasbīh (glorifying Allāh), Tahmīd (praising Allāh) Istighfār (seeking Allāh's forgiveness) after the Surah was revealed because it indicated that he was soon to leave the world. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه once recited Surah Nasr and then told the audience that after the revelation of this Surah the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself ever so greatly in deeds of the Ākhirah. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was always engaged in matters related to the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. He exerted himself in propagating the message of Islām to the masses and in turning their attention towards Allāh. Although this was a great act of Ibādah in itself, it nevertheless diverted some of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم attention towards people. He was therefore instructed to engage in acts that directed his attention exclusively to Allāh. The same message is given in verses 7 and 8 of Surah Inshirāh (*Surah 94*) where Allāh says, *"So when you have completed, then exert yourself and turn to your Lord."*

Despite exhaustive efforts in Makkah, not many Makkans accepted Islām. Instead of accepting Islām, they opposed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and forced him to leave Makkah. By then the message of Islām had spread throughout the Arabian peninsula. However, the Arabs did not accept Islām and decided to await the outcome of the struggle between him and his tribe the Quraysh. Consequently, the battles of Badr, Uhud and Ahzāb followed after the Hijrah (*migration*). Eventually, in Ramadhān of the 8th year after Hijrah (*migration*), the Muslims marched into Makkah and the Quraysh accepted Islām. It was after this momentous event that delegations of the various Arab tribes arrived in Madinah in droves to accept Islām. After accepting Islām, they returned to their respective areas and converted the people there. Surah Nasr predicts this when it says, *'you see people entering the Religion of Allāh in droves"*

Scholars mention that when one reaches old age, one should exert oneself in Ibādah (*worship*) in preparation for death.

سورة اللهب

Makkan	Surah Lahab	Verses 5

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) May the hands of Abu Lahab be shattered and he be destroyed. (2) Neither his wealth nor the things he earned shall avail him. (3) He shall soon enter the flaming fire... (4) ... and his wife as well. (Evil is) that woman who carries firewood. (5) Around her neck is a string of palm fibre.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم's father Abdullāh had ten brothers, all the children of his father Abdul Muttalib. One of these ten uncles of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was called Abu Lahab. His real name was Abdul Uzza. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced his Prophethood, Abū Lahab and his wife were among his staunchest opponents.

When Allāh revealed the verse: *"Warn your closest relatives"*, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mounted the hill of Safa and called various tribes of the Quraysh like the Banu Fahar, the Banu Adi, etc by name. Their response was so overwhelming that those who could not present themselves sent someone to represent them. When they had all gathered, he asked them, *"Will you people believe me If I told you that an army of horsemen were advancing to attack you from behind this mountain?"*

They replied, *"We shall certainly believe you. We have never known you to be untruthful.* "The Nabi (*Prophet*) صلى الله عليه وسلم then took the names of many relatives present and warned them about the life after death. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said to them, *"Purchase your souls (by carrying out deeds that will save you from Hell). I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. O children of Abd Manāf I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. O Abbās bin Abdil Muttalib! I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. O (my aunt) Safiyya! I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. O Fātima the daughter of Muhammad! Ask whatever you please*

from my wealth. I cannot save you from Allāh 's punishment." Addressing the entire assembly, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse *"He is but a warner to you before the advent of a severe punishment."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said to them, *"I am warning you of a severe punishment (jf you do not believe in what I preach to you)."* Thereupon Abu Lahab said, *"May you be destroyed forever. Have you gathered us for this?"* It was then that Surah Lahab was revealed, where Allah says, *"May the hands of Abu Lahab be shattered and he be destroyed. Neither his wealth nor the things he earned shall avail him."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 702*]

A narration of Muslim (*v. 1 p. 14*) states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed the Quraysh individually and collectively. Addressing the Banu Ka'b bin Luway, the Banu Murra bin Ka'b, the Banu Abdush Shams, Banu Abd Manāf and the Banu Hāshim, he said, *"Save yourselves from Hell. I cannot save you from Allāh 's punishment." It* was then that Abu Lahab said what he did and Surah Lahab was revealed.

Abu Lahab received the title of *"Abu Lahab"* (*"Father of flames "*) because he was very handsome and had a reddish complexion that resembled the colour of flames. When Abu Lahab cursed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh Ta'āla used the word *"Lahab"* (flames, which was a source of pride to him) to describe the disgraceful punishment that he will suffer in the Hereafter. Allāh describes the fire of Hell as *"Dhāta Lahab"* (translated above as *'flaming fire)*

Allāh Ta'āla says, *"May the hands of Abu Lahab be shattered and he be destroyed."* Allāma Qastalāni رحمة الله عليه has written that Abu Lahab's hands are mentioned here because he used his hands to throw stones at the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, causing his blessed heels to bleed.

Allāh Ta'āla mentions that before entering the flaming fire, Abu Lahab will be destroyed. This occurred in this world when he developed a terrible case of small pox which made people avoid him. People were so afraid that the disease might be contagious that they forced him to live in an isolated house and they did not associate with him at all. He finally died in this state. His corpse lay untouched in the house for three days, eventually, when people started taunting his sons, they managed to get someone to place his body against a wall. They then stoned the corpse until it crumbled and was buried beneath the stones. [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" v. 3 p. 309*]

"Ar Rowdhul Unf" states that Abu Lahab's corpse was bound to a stake and cast down a pit. Thereafter, stones were thrown on top of it. There is presently a mountain near Makkah where tradition has it that Abu Lahab was thrown there. The mountain is also called the mountain of Abu Lahab.

Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Neither his wealth nor the things he earned shall avail him."* Abu Lahab was extremely wealthy and he also had many children. Commentators mention that *"the things he earned"* refer to his children because The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

"Your children are from the things you earn." Therefore, the wealth and children of Abu Lahab will be useless to him in the Hereafter. *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* states that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Quraysh that they should save themselves from Hell, Abu Lahab told the people that if he were ever to

suffer punishment on account of his disbelief, he would ransom himself with his wealth. It was in response to this that Allāh Ta'āla revealed the verse: *"Neither his wealth nor the things he earned shall avail him."*

Allāh continues, *"He shall soon enter the flaming fire and his wife as well."* Abu Lahab's wife was a woman called Arwa, who was commonly known as Umm Jamīl. She was the sister of Abu Sufyān and like her husband, vehemently opposed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Although every disbeliever will enter Hell, Abu Lahab and his wife have been specifically named as inmates of Hell, indicating that that they were a really evil couple. As long as the world exists, people shall be reciting this Surah, proclaiming the despised nature of these two and announcing their final abode. May Allāh Ta'āla save us from Hell. Āmīn.

Describing Abu Lahab's wife, Allāh says, *"(Evil is) that woman who carries firewood."* In addition to the many things she did to harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, one of her worst acts was that she used to collect thorny branches and place them on the road the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used. Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could easily avoid them, the act indicates her sadistic nature and enmity for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She left no stone unturned to harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and even did things that caused him the slightest harm.

The following interpretations of this verse have also been reported:

- *Despite her wealth, she was extremely miserly and used to carry firewood by herself.*
- *Size used to carry tales, symbolised by firewood because these tales ignited the fires of discord and enmity between people.*
- *'The firewood is symbolic of the sins she committed:*
- *Just as she assisted her husband to harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, she will assist in punishing him in Hell by carrying firewood to fuel the flames burning him. [Ibn Kathīr]*

Allāh says further about her, *"Around her neck is a string of palm fibre."* Some commentators have stated that this string will be around her neck to carry the firewood. However, this interpretation does not seem appropriate because people do not tie a bundle of firewood around their necks. Other commentators have mentioned that she used to wear an extremely expensive necklace which she told people she would spend to oppose the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In lieu of this, she will be made to wear a necklace of fire in Hell which will resemble a string made of palm fibre. Some commentators have translated *"string of palm fibre"* as *"a woven string"*.

NOTE: The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had four daughters. Sayyidah Zaynab رضى الله عنها was the eldest and Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها was the youngest. Between these two there were Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm and Sayyidah Ruqayya رضى الله عنها. The Holy Prophet صلى الله

وسلم عليه married the three eldest daughters before announcing his Nubuwat (*Prophethood*). Sayyidah Zaynab رضى الله عنها was married to Abul Ās bin Rabī رضى الله عنه, while Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ruqayya رضى الله عنها were married to Utba and Utayba, two sons of Abu Lahab. When Surah Lahab was revealed, the two had not yet started living with their husbands. Abu Lahab told his sons that they either divorce the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم daughters or completely disassociate themselves from him.

While one son merely pronounced the divorce before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the other insulted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as well. In response to his abuse, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed, *"O Allāh! Release one of Your beasts on him."* Although not a Muslim, Abu Lahab was alarmed to hear this curse. He said to his son, *"You will be unable to escape this."*

Abu Lahab once took this son along with him to Shām (*syria*). He told the people in their caravan to take good care of his son because he feared the curse of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When they camped at a place where there were many wild animals, they piled all their goods, making a small hillock. The son was then placed on top to sleep while the rest of the people slept around the pile. However, no plan can thwart Allāh's decree. That night a lion came to their camp and, sniffing the faces of all those asleep, left them unharmed. It then leapt right on top of the pile, recognised its victim and snapped his head off. The condemned man's shriek was useless because none could save him.

"Jam'ul Fawā'id" reports that the doomed son was Utayba, Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm's رضى الله عنها husband. It is also reported that when the caravan camped at a placed called Zarqā, a lion circled the camp. When Utayba saw it, he said, *"Alas! This lion will not leave without killing me according to Muhammad's* صلى الله عليه وسلم *curse. Sitting where he was, Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *has killed me here."* Thereafter, the lion left to return at night to complete its task.

"Dalā'ilun Nabuwwah" (p. 163) reports that the ill-fated son was Utba. It is mentioned in this book that the people of the caravan heard the roar of a lion as they travelled. Hearing this, Utba trembled with fear. The others asked him, *"Why are you trembling so? You need not worry so much because we all share the same fate."* He replied, *"Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *had cursed me. By Allāh! There is none beneath the sky as truthful as he."* That night, he did not touch his supper. The people of the caravan slept around him that night and the lion arrived, growling softly. Sniffing at all the others, it left them and attacked only Utba. The doomed man's last words were, *"I always maintained that Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *was the most truthful."* Abu Lahab also mentioned, "I had always known that this son would never escape the curse of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم."

Although the narration of *"Dalā'ilun Nabuwwah"* mentions that this son was Utba, the correct opinion is that he was Utayba because reliable books like *"Al Isābah"*, *"Asadul Ghāba"* and *"Isti'āb"* all mention that Utba became a Muslim. Hāfidh Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه writes in *"Al Isāba"* that when the Muslims conquered Makkah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Sayyidina Abbās رضى الله عنه, *"Where are your brother (Abu Lahab's) sons Utba and Mu'attab?"* When Sayyidina Abbās رضى الله عنه said that the two had left Makkah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked

him to bring them to him. He found them in Arafah and they hastily came to accept Islām. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"I had asked Allāh for these two sons of my uncle."* Both these sons of Abu Lahab participated in the Battle of Hunayn. Utba continued living in Makkah and passed away there.

It is truly unfortunate that despite attesting to the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and being convinced about the imminent punishment, Abu Lahab and his son refused to accept Islām. When a person becomes obstinate, he will adhere to falsehood even though he may be a rational person. Instead of behaving sensibly he will then fall prey to his carnal passions and carry out deeds that displease his Lord. May Allāh save us from such behaviour. Āmīn.

NOTE: The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم eldest daughter Sayyidah Zaynab رضى الله عنها was married to Sayyidina Abul Ās bin Rabī رضى الله عنه, who also migrated to Madinah. When he passed away in the 8th year after Hijrah (*migration*), The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم personally laid his body to rest in the grave. After Utba and Utayba divorced the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم daughters, Sayyidah Ruqayya رضى الله عنها was married to Sayyidina Uthmān bin Affān رضى الله عنه. The couple migrated twice to Abyssinia and then to Madinah. Sayyidah Ruqayya رضى الله عنها passed away when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had left Madinah for the Battle of Badr. May Allāh be pleased with her and keep her pleased. Āmīn.

After her demise, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married his third daughter Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm رضى الله عنها to Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه. Because Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه married two of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم daughters consecutively, he was known as *"Dhun Nūrayn" ("The Possessor of two lights")*. When Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm رضى الله عنها passed away in the 9th year after Hijrah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that if he had another unmarried daughter, he would have married her also to Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها was the youngest daughter of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She married Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, from whom she bore children. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم lineage proceeds from this marriage. She passed away six months after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

سورة الاخلاص

Makkan	Surah Ikhlās	Verses 4

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Say, "He Allāh is One." (2) "Allāh is Independent." (3) "He has no children and is not anyone's child." (4) "There is none equal to Him."

Although Surah Ikhlās is brief, it makes the fact clear that Allāh Ta'āla is The One and Only worthy of worship and that none shares His attributes. Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه narrates that Surah Ikhlās was revealed when the polytheists asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them Allāh's lineage.

He narrates that Āmir bin Tufayl and Arbid bin Rabī'ah once came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Āmir said, *"O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! To what do you call us?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"I am calling you towards Allāh."* Āmir then said, *"Describe Allāh to us. Is He made of gold, silver, iron or wood?"* According to another narration, the Jews asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them what Allāh was made of and whether Allāh eats and drinks. It was then that Surah Ikhlās was revealed. Because of their insolence, Arbid was killed by a thunderbolt while Āmir was killed by a plague. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

This Surah is called Surah Ikhlās ("the Surah of Sincere Devotion") because it is sincerely devoted to the subject of Oneness of Allah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also referred to this Surah as Surah Ikhlās. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 6 p. 414*]

Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was the first man and the first Nabi (*Prophet*). It was from him and his wife Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام that mankind multiplied. He taught his children Oneness of Allah and they all worshipped only Allāh. Many generations after him also worshipped only Allāh. Since it was impossible for satan to make people deny the existence of Allāh, he started by indoctrinating them with false beliefs. One of the fundamental beliefs he used to veer them away from Oneness of Allah was to make them believe that Allāh Ta'āla was similar to man in that He had children and required the things man requires.

Another poisonous arrow he shot at them was to make them believe that

among Allāh's creation were beings who also had to be worshipped to attain proximity to Allāh. He convinced them that these beings would intercede for them in Allāh's court if they worshipped them. Using such methods, Satan made many people believe that the angels were Allāh's daughters and that people like Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام were Allāh's sons. He also made them prostrate to idols and sacrifice animals in the names of idols. Idol worship began even before the coming of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. As people fell fo. Satan's guile, Allāh Ta'āla continued sending the Anbiya (*Prophet's*) عليهم السلام as well as divine scriptures to this world to guide them. However, the majority of people in every period refused to believe in Oneness of Allah and continued practising polytheism.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم started calling people to Oneness of Allah, polytheism had become so widespread and accepted that the polytheists gaped and said, *"Has he made all the many gods into one god? This is indeed something strange* !" When anything becomes popular, anyone speaking against it is treated with suspicion even though the thing is evil. When polytheism and idolatry became popular in the Arabian peninsula, even the progeny of the stalwart of Oneness of Allah [Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] stooped to the level of placing 360 idols in the Ka'ba, which he built as a shrine of Oneness of Allah. Arabia was filled with temples and idols that were revered by all.

When these people asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to explain Allāh's lineage, Allāh revealed Surah Ikhlās commanding the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the people that *"He Allāh is One."* This verse makes it clear that Allāh is Only One of His kind and that none of the creation can be compared to Him in any way.

Furthermore, Allāh states, *"Allāh is Independent."* Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has mentioned that this means that Allāh needs no one, but that everything needs Allāh. Translating the word *"Samad"* as *"Independent"* does not do justice to the word because the word includes the fact that all are in need of Allāh. *'Ruhul Ma'āni"* reports from Ibnul Ambāri رحمة الله عليه that lexicologists are unanimous that the word *"Samad"* refers to a sovereign who is second to none and to whom everyone turns for their needs and all their affairs.

According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, the word *"Samad"* refers to a sovereign whose sovereignty is absolute, whose honour is absolute, whose majesty is absolute, whose forbearance is absolute, whose knowledge is absolute, whose wisdom is absolute and whose every fragment of honour and sovereignty is absolute.

"He has no children and is not anyone's child." This verse answers those people who want to know Allāh's lineage. They should know that Allāh Ta'āla has no family at all. There is always a similarity between parent and child. Since none is similar to Allāh at all, He can have neither parents nor children. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Maryam, *"They say, 'Rahmān has taken a child.' You have certainly said a grave thing. (The gravity of what you say is so intense that) The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to pieces. All this because they ascribed children to Rahmān. It is not befitting of Rahmān to take children. Every thing within the heavens and the earth shall come to Rahmān as*

slaves." [*Surah 19, verses 88-93*]

Allāh has been forever and shall remain forever. He had no birth and none was born from Him. The Polytheists who believed that the angels are Allāh's daughters are wrong just as the Christians are wrong to believe that Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام is Allāh's son and just as the Jews are wrong to believe that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh's son. They merely copy what others say without thinking. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Taubah, *"The Jews say, 'Uzair is the son of Allāh!' and the Christians say, 'Masīh is the son of Allāh!' These are mere words that emerge from their mouths. They imitate the statements of those who passed before them. May Allāh destroy them! Where are they wandering astray?"* [*Surah 9, verse 30*]

"There is none equal to Him." This verse negates every type of similarity that people may draw between Allāh and his creation. Only He is worthy of worship, only He has knowledge of everything and only He can fulfil needs. This verse is similar to the verse of Surah Shura where Allāh Ta'āla says, *"There is nothing like Him, and He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing. "*[*Surah 42, verse 11*]

In an exceptionally concise manner, the Surah confirms that every good attribute is found in Allāh and it denies that Allāh has any defect.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that people constantly say that Allāh has created everything and then they ask who created Allāh. When this question is posed, one should say, *"Allāh is Independent. He has no children and is not anyone's child. There is none equal to Him."* According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised that when this question plagues one's mind, one should say:

> *"I believe in Allāh and His apostles* عليهم السلام*"* [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has also narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh Ta'āla says, *"The son of Ādam has falsified Me when he should not do so. He has also sworn Me when he should not do so. He has falsified Me by saying that I cannot resurrect him whereas I created him the first time and creating the second time is even easier. Man swears me by saying that I have children whereas I am The One, The Independent. I have no children neither am I anyone's child. There is none equal to Me."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 13*]

THE VIRTUES OF SURAH IKHLĀS

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that a Sahabi (*Companion*) رضى الله عنه once heard another Sahabi رضى الله عنه repeatedly reciting Surah Ikhlās. When he reported this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم sensed that he regarded the act as insignificant. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that Surah Ikhlās equalled a third of the Qur'ān. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 750*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told them, *"Should I not recite a third of the Qur'ān to you?"* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited Surah Ikhlās. [*Muslim v. 1 p. 271*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once

appointed a person to lead a military expedition. Whenever this person led the others in Salāh, he always ended every Rakāh by reciting Surah Ikhlās. When the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم mentioned this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he told them to ask the person his reason for doing this. When they asked him, he replied, *"The Surah is a description of Allāh and I love reciting it."* Upon hearing this reply, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم to tell the person that Allāh loves him as well. [*Muslim v. 1 p. 271*]

According to a narration of Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه, when the person told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he loved the Surah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, *"Your love for this Surah shall enter you into Heaven."* [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyab رحمة الله عليه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A palace in Heaven is built for the person who recites Surah Ikhlās ten times and two palaces in Heaven are built for the person who recites Surah Ikhlās twenty times." Hearing this, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! In this manner we shall have many palaces built."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Allāh is a Great Giver. He has with him tremendous rewards for as many deeds as you can manage."* [*Dārmi v. 3 p. 320*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who recites Surah Ikhlās two hundred times shall have fifty years of his sins erased from his record of deeds. Of course, the debts he owes to others will not be waived." [*"Mishkāt" p. 188 from Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه has also narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a person recites Surah Ikhlās a hundred times while lying on his right side before sleeping, Allāh will tell him on the Day of Judgment, *"O My slave! Enter Heaven from the right hand side."* [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once heard a person reciting Surah Ikhlās, he said, *"It is obligatory for him."* *"What is?"* asked Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه. *"Heaven* "replied the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*Tirmidhi*]

سورة الفلق

Makkan	Surah Falaq	Verses 5

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ ٱلْفَلَقِ ﴿1﴾ مِن شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿2﴾ وَمِن شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ﴿3﴾ وَمِن شَرِّ ٱلنَّفَّٰثَٰتِ فِى ٱلْعُقَدِ ﴿4﴾ وَمِن شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ﴿5﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) Say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of the morning..." (2) ... from the evil of what He has created..." (3) "...from the evil of darkness when it arrives... (4).. .from the evil of those women who blow on knots..." (5) "...and from the evil of the envier when he envies."

سورة الناس

Makkan	Surah Nās	Verses 6

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿1﴾ مَلِكِ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿2﴾ إِلَٰهِ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿3﴾ مِن شَرِّ ٱلْوَسْوَاسِ ٱلْخَنَّاسِ ﴿4﴾ ٱلَّذِى يُوَسْوِسُ فِى صُدُورِ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿5﴾ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ ﴿6﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind..." (2) "...the King of mankind..." (3) "...the Deity of mankind..." (4) "...from the evil of the whisperer who draws back..." (5) .... who whispers into the hearts of mankind..." (6) ..... be he from among the Jinn or from mankind."

Surah Falaq and Surah Nās are referred to as the "*Mu'awwadhatayn*" (i.e. the

two Surahs by which protection is sought). Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها narrates that a person from the Jewish Banu Ruzayq tribe by the name of Labīd bin Ā'sim cast a magical spell over the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, causing him to forget things that he had already done. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made supplication to Allāh, Allāh revealed the plot to him. As the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم slept, Allāh Ta'āla sent two angels in the form of humans to him. The one sat at the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم head side while the other sat by his feet. The following conversation ensued:

- *What is the matter with this person?*
- *He has been affected with black magic.*
- *Who has done it to him?"*
- *Labīd bin Ā'sim.*
- *On what did he do it?*
- *He did it on the hair from a comb and some palm leaves.*
- *Where are these things?*
- *In the well of Dhi Arwān.*

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم awoke, he went with some of the Sahabah رضی الله عنهم to the said well. Upon arriving there, they found that the water of the well had become so discoloured that it appeared as if someone had thrown henna (*the Indian privet, leaves are used to dyeing the hairs, feet and hands.*) into it. The date palms there resembled the heads of Satan. When Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم why he did not publicise the matter, he told her that he did not like evil (news) to spread after Allāh Ta'āla had cured him. He therefore had the hair and leaves buried. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 858 and Muslim v. 2 p. 221*]

According to a narration of Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضی الله عنه, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم suffered for a few days from the effect of the black magic that the Jews had cast on him. Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a particular Jew had cast a spell on him and that he had tied knots in his hair to accomplish this. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched some of the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم to remove the hair from the well that Jibrīl عليه السلام had described. When the hair was brought to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he was instantly cured just as a tied person feels after being freed from his bonds. This was never brought to the attention of the Jew guilty of the black magic, who was never seen again. [*Nasa'ī - Chapter concerning the magic of the Ahlul Kitāb*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that when the clump of palm leaves was removed from the well, the comb and some hair of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were found in it. Together with this was a wax figurine of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with needles stuck into it. There were eleven knots tied in the hair. Jibrīl عليه السلام had come with Surah Falaq and Surah Nās (the number of verses of these Surahs equal eleven) and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم opened a knot and

removed a needle with every one of the eleven verses that he recited. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was then completely cured.

"Ruhūl Ma'āni" also reports that Labīd bin Ā'sim's daughters assisted him in his sinister task. It is because of their involvement that Surah Falaq states, *"the evil of those women who blow on knots"*. The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* has written that this verse may be translated as *"the evil of those souls who blow on knots"*. This translation would include men and women who carry out this evil practice.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has quoted from the Tafsīr of Tha'labi رحمة الله عليه that a Jewish boy used to serve the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Jews made the boy give them some of the hair from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم' s comb and some of the teeth of the comb. When he complied, they used witchcraft on the hair and comb teeth to make the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ill. (Black magic is usually done using something that is associated with the victim).

COMMENTARY OF SURAH FALAQ

After discussing the circumstances of revelation, let us now look at the commentary of Surah Falaq. Allāh Ta'āla says, *"Say, 'I seek refuge with the Lord of the morning...'"* The Arabic word *'falaq* "actually refers to splitting or cleaving. Allāh Ta'āla uses the same word in Surah An'ām where He says, *"Undoubtedly Allāh is the One Who splits the grains and date stones."* Commentators state that the word "falaq" in this Surah refers to the morning because it splits the darkness of night as it arrives. Some commentators say that the morning is mentioned here to allude to the Day of Judgment. Different people start the morning in different ways as they rise from their beds. While some are happy, others are sad. While some are enjoying themselves, others are in difficulty. In a like manner, people will experience different conditions as they emerge from their graves on the Day of Judgment.

Certain Scholars interpret *'falaq"* as the creation because everything was in the realm of non-existence until Allāh split open the barrier to existence and let them into the realm of existence. By this interpretation, the verse reads: *"I seek refuge with the Lord of creation..."* Allāh Ta'āla is referred to as the *"Lord of the morning"* because just as the darkness of night is dispelled by His command in the morning, the harm and evil of things (like black magic) are also dispelled by His command.

Allāh's protection is sought against *"the evil of what He has created"*. This verse refers to everything, including people, Jinn, animals, reptiles, inanimate objects, winds, fires that injure one, water that may drown one and everything else that may cause physical, emotional or spiritual harm to a person.

Furthermore, the Surah induces one to seek Allāh's protection from *"the evil of darkness when it arrives..."*. Because the word *'ghāsiq"* (translated above as *"darkness "*) actually refers to a dark thing, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that it refers to the night when it begins to get dark. Protection is sought from the night because it is at this time that the Satan, harmful reptiles and animals emerge. It is also the time when thieves and robbers practise their trade and the time when black magic has the worst effect.

Tirmidhi reports a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once looking at the moon when he told Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, *"O Ayshah! Seek Allāh's protection from the evil of this (moon) because this is the 'ghāsiq when it arrives'."* The word *"ghāsiq"* may therefore also refer to the moon. Because the word *"ghāsiq"* may refer to darkness as well as the moon and not specifically the moon only, one may not say that the moon is a bright body and therefore cannot be a *"ghāsiq"* (something dark). Nonetheless, the moon does lose its brightness when it sets and during eclipses. In fact, a lunar eclipse may signal the coming of some disaster and when it does occur, one needs to seek Allāh's protection.

Allāh then advises people to seek His protection against *"the evil of those women who blow on knots..."*. The explanation of this has already been given above.

The final evil from which the Surah instructs us to seek protection against is *'from the evil of the envier when he envies."* When people are blessed with knowledge, beauty, wealth or some other blessing, others are generally envious of them. While some people desire only that they also be blessed with the same bounty, others wish that those blessed with the bounty should be deprived of it. Such depraved people then make every effort to harm the person blessed with the bounty and they even instigate others to harbour malice for the person. In their rage of jealousy, they ensure that the person meets with opposition and that he encounters difficulty in every activity.

A person may face jealousy from family members and from strangers; from man and from Jinn; from Muslims and from disbelievers. When jealousy consumes a person, he becomes blinded and resorts to everything permissible and everything not permissible to ensure that the opposite party loses whatever s/he has. It was the same jealousy that prompted Labīd bin Ā'sim to cast a spell over the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Jealousy destroys any person who adopts it.

Allāh Ta'āla has blessed different people with different bounties for reasons that are all full of wisdom. When a person envies another and desires that the person should be deprived of any bounty, he is actually objecting to Allāh's allotment of bounties. It is as if he is saying (Allāh forbid!) that Allāh's allocation of bounties is incorrect and should be as he (the envier) desires. It is obvious that the creation have no jurisdiction over the affairs of the Creator. When a person does something rational which his children cannot understand and his children object, he will obviously be annoyed yet he is a fallible human being. Worse than this is man's objection to a decision of Allāh when Allāh is Infallible. This is the most obvious reason for the abomination of jealousy.

Furthermore, when someone has been consumed by jealousy for another, the jealous person leaves no stone unturned to harm the person he envies. Besides backbiting about him and tainting his name, the jealous person will also resort to causing physical or financial harm to the person, thereby committing untold sins. In addition to this, the jealous person will have no time to engage in any good deeds because of his preoccupation with causing harm to the other person. Even if he does carry out any good deeds, these will all be useless to him because on the Day of Judgment he will have to surrender them all to the person to whom he caused harm.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم said, *"Beware of jealousy because it consumes good deeds just as fire consumes dry wood."* [*Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Zubayr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The disease of the previous Ummahs has crept among you, viz, jealousy. Hatred (the natural consequence of jealousy) is something that shaves. I do not say that it shaves hair. Rather it shaves off one 's Religion." [*"Mishkāt" p. 428 from Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah*]

Just as a razor removes long and short hair, so too does this vile trait of jealousy obliterate every major and minor good deed. Therefore, the jealous person destroys himself in this world as well as in the next where he will have nothing to his account of good deeds. Every good deed is burnt to ashes in the smouldering fire of jealousy. In fact, jealousy is itself a punishment for the jealous person in this world. His heart is forever alight with the flames of jealousy, causing all the pleasures of his life to lose their joy. In addition to this, his jealousy does not reduce the bounties of the person he is jealous of.

Wise are the words of someone who said, *"Bother not with taking revenge from the jealous one. It is sufficient revenge that he is grieved about your happiness."*

Jealousy is a disease that prevents a person from accepting the truth even though he may recognise it as the truth. Even though the Jews recognised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be the final Nabi (*Prophet*), they refused to proclaim Belief because they were jealous that the final Nabi (*Prophet*) should be from the Bani Ismā'īl (the Arabs) instead of from their own nation (the Bani Isrā'īl). To validate their denial, they falsely said that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام had made supplication that a Nabi (*Prophet*) عليهم السلام should always remain among his progeny. [*Nasa'ī*]

The Jews used to tell each other to believe only in someone who conforms to their religion, as mentioned in verse 73 of Surah Āl Imrān (Surah 3). Referring to this jealousy of theirs, Allāh Ta'āla says in verse 54 of Surah Nisā (Surah 4), *"Or are they jealous of people [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] because of what Allāh has given them of His bounty?"*

Not only did the Jews refuse to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they even prevented others from doing so. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Baqarah, *"Many of the People of the Book wish that they could return you to be disbelievers after you have believed This is due to jealousy from within after the truth has become apparent to them."* [*Surah 2, verse 109*]

Just as the Jews refused to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because of the jealousy they bore for him, many of the polytheists also refused to believe for the same reason. Akhnas bin Sharīq once met Abu Jahl and asked him, *"None is present here besides the two of us, so tell me the truth. Is Muhammad bin Abdullāh* صلى الله عليه وسلم *true in his claim or not?"* Abu Jahl replied, *"I swear by Allāh that Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *is truthful. He has never lied, but we deny him because what will be left for the rest of the Quraysh if the Banu Qusay [the tribe of Quraysh to which* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *belonged] bear the standard, are responsible for supplying water to the pilgrims, keep the keys of the Ka'ba, lead the consultative assembly and then still have a Nabi (Prophet) from them?"* It was in response to this that Allāh

revealed the following verse of Surah An'ām: *"We know well that their talks grieve you. Indeed they do not deny you, but these oppressors deny the verses of Allāh."* [*Surah 6, verse 33*]

Jealousy is such an evil trait that people like the Jews and the polytheists were prepared to suffer eternal punishment in Hell rather than swallow their jealousy. It is noticed that people burn with jealousy when someone of a lower social standing or someone with less wealth than them acquires Islāmic knowledge. What is ironical is that despite the avenues being open for them, they show no interest in acquiring the knowledge of Religion. They are jealous merely because they feel that people of a lower social standing should not excel them in anything. They are content only when they have things that nobody else has.

Although protection is sought from everything that Allāh Ta'āla has created, further protection is sought from three specific evils. These are mentioned separately even though they are included in the broad connotation of *"the evil of what He has created"*. The first of these three specific evils is *"the evil of darkness when it arrives"*. The evils of the night are understood and are specifically mentioned because of their profound nature.

The second evil from which protection is specifically sought is *"the evil of those women who blow on knots"* i.e. from the evil of black magic. This evil is specifically mentioned because the ill effects of black magic are devastating and because people are generally unmindful of treating themselves for this. It often occurs that people continue treating their illnesses medically without success, little realising that the disease has been caused by black magic. Their condition then only gets worse.

The third evil explicitly mentioned is *"the evil of the envier when he envies."* One is generally unaware of the jealousy that someone bears for one and will thus not take precautions to guard against it. By reciting the Surah, one will be protected against all these evils.

THE COMMENTARY OF SURAH NĀS

Protection is also sought from Allāh Ta'āla in this Surah. The Surah begins by mentioning three attributes of Allāh viz, that Allāh is *"the Lord of mankind"*, *"the King of mankind"* and *"the Deity of mankind"*. Thereafter, protection is sought against *"the evil of the whisperer who draws back"*. Because evil whispers affect the hearts of mankind, the Lord, King and Deity of mankind is asked for protection from this. It is only He Who can provide the necessary protection. Because evil whispers and thoughts can destroy a person's Belief if he practises them, it has been mentioned that Surah Nās teaches man to pray to Allāh to protect him from the difficulties of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. On the other hand, Surah Falaq teaches man to seek Allāh's protection from the difficulties and harms of this world.

The Satan constantly whisper into the hearts of man. They entice man to commit disbelief, polytheism and various other sins. It is for this reason that man should always seek Allāh's protection against this. In Surah Mu'minūn, Allāh instructs, *"And say, 'O my Lord! I seek refuge with You from the evil whispering of the Satan and I seek refuge with You, O my Lord, so that they do not approach me.'"* [*Surah 23, verses 97,98*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Satan will come to you and ask who created certain things? In this way he will eventually ask who created Allāh? When matters reach such a head, then seek protection with Allāh from Satan and let the matter rest i.e. do not further entertain the thought. In a narration of Abu Dawūd, it is mentioned that when people start asking this question, one should say:

"Allāhu Ahad Allāhus Samad lam yalid wa lam yūlid wa lam yakul lahu kufu 'wan ahad."

"Allāh is One. Allāh is Independent. He has no parents nor is He the child of anyone and none is equal to Him."

Thereafter one should make the action of spitting three times to the left and recite, *"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"* (I seek Allāh's protection against the accursed Satan".)

This hadith cites an example of how Satan assaults one's beliefs. The whispers of the Satan are like a hornet's nest. No harm will come to one if one leaves it alone. However, once one rouses it, it will be extremely difficult if not impossible to get away. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised us to ignore these whispers because giving them thought will place one in a predicament that is difficult to escape from. This prescription is a tried and tested one that ensures success.

Satan is a thief of people's belief and casts thoughts in people's mind to rob them of their belief. While he continuously makes an effort to plunge the believers into disbelief, he works on the disbelievers so that they remain staunch disbelievers. He uses various approaches to achieve his objectives and constantly casts doubts in people's Belief.

Satan will plague one with questions concerning Allāh's being and attributes, which can jeopardise one's belief. When one refuses to respond to these questions, Satan tells one that one is unable to answer because one is a disbeliever. At this stage one should say to him, *"Go away! You are yourself a disbeliever. Why are you so concerned about my belief?"* If one entertains Satan's discussion, he will make one a disbeliever. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم advice is to terminate the discussion which Satan inspires into the heart, to recite *"A'udhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"* and to make the action of spitting thrice to the left. This spitting action degrades and demoralises Satan.

If unable to induce a person to practise disbelief, Satan always tries to make people commit sins. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a man and a woman are together alone, the third person there is Satan. This hadith prohibits non-Mahram men and women from being in each other's company. Satan is always there to make them fornicate.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that a woman is an object of concealment. If she emerges from her home, Satan stares at her and directs everyone else's attention towards her.

Satan is also responsible for making people have ill thoughts about others.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once sitting for I'tikāf (*Seclusion*) in the Masjid when one of his wives Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها visited him. After speaking for a long while, she stood up to leave. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم accompanied her up to the boundaries of the Masjid when two Ansāri prophet's of companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم passed by. Seeing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with a lady, they began walking faster. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to them, *"Walk at leisure. She is my wife Safiyya."* The two Sahabah رضى الله عنه exclaimed, *"Subhā Nallāh, O Allāh's The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*! (How can we have ill thoughts about you?)" The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *said to them, "Verily Satan runs like blood through man's body. I feared that Satan might cast an evil thought in your minds."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 464*]

Protection is sought *"....from the evil of the whisperer who draws back"*. Describing the whisperer, Allāh says that he *"draws back"* immediately after injecting the poison of evil thoughts. Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Satan sits on man's heart with his snout in it. Whenever man remembers Allāh, Satan withdraws. However, when he does not remember Allāh, Satan makes a meal of him. This is "the whisperer who draws back". [*"Hisnul Hasīn"*]

Describing the whisperer further, Allāh say, *"who whispers into the hearts of mankind, be he from among the Jinn or from mankind"* This verse makes it evident that one is not instigated to do wrong only by the Satan. Other people are also responsible for this. Whereas the instigation of the Satan takes place internally, humans instigate either verbally or physically. It is by such instigations that people stray from the path of righteousness and fall headlong into sin. Nowadays, there is no shortage of evil influences. Immorality and vice have become widespread with the introduction of television, videos, magazines and the Internet. People's minds have been corrupted and they are immersed in sin. In fact, man's evil *"whispering"* often proves to be more effective than that of Satan. Man's instigation is effective because man trusts man and takes advice from him. It is therefore easy for one to mislead another.

Of course, because the instigation of the Satan is subtle and intangible, it can be extremely powerful. Allāh warns mankind in Surah A'rāf when He says, *"O children of Ādam, let not Satan entice you as he removed your parents from Heaven, tearing off from them their garments so as to expose their private parts. Surely he and his kind see you in a way that you do not see them. Indeed We have made the Satan allies to those who do not believe."* [*Surah 7, verse 27*]

The term "Satan" can refer to the evil ones among man and among Jinn. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah An'ām, *"Thus We have appointed for every Nabi (Prophet) enemies who are devils (Satan) from humans and jinn, who whisper to each other things that seem good but are intended to deceive."* [*Surah 6, verse 112*]

NOTE: Some people are of the opinion that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was never affected by black magic. In saying his, they are actually denying the authentic narrations of Bukhari and Muslim. They maintain that suffering from the effects of black magic does not behove the status of a Nabi (*Prophet*). Such people are wrong. They fail to understand that the Prophets عليهم السلام were human beings

and thus suffered the same effects that all humans suffer. Many Prophets عليهم السلام were killed and even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم suffered from fever. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once fell from his animal, he injured his leg and had to perform Salāh sitting down for some time. A scorpion also once stung the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Tears flowed from his eyes when his son passed away and he even suffered hunger pangs. These are all part of a human's experiences, just as being affected by black magic is something that can affect any human being. Being human, the Prophets عليهم السلام were no exception.

THE NECESSITY FOR SEEKING ALLĀH'S PROTECTION

There are many things in this world that are beneficial for man just as there are many things that cause great harm and difficulty to him. The Ahadīth mention many things from which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sought Allāh's protection. Towards the end of his famous collection of Ahadīth, Imām Nasa'ī رحمة الله عليه has included a chapter concerning seeking Allāh's protection. Among the many things from which one ought to seek Allāh's protection, he has mentioned the following:

- *Miserliness.*
- *Cowardice.*
- *Corruption of the heart (disbelief and polytheism).*
- *Punishment in the grave.*
- *Defects in hearing and sight.*
- *The evil of the tongue.*
- *'The evil that may creep into the heart.*
- *Extreme old age.*
- *Helplessness.*
- *Illness.*
- *Laziness.*
- *grief*
- *Trials at the time of death.*
- *Dajjāl.*
- *Poverty.*
- *Disgrace.*
- *Disbelief*
- *Hell.*
- *Misappropriation of trusts.*

- *Hunger.*
- *Schism.*
- *Hypocrisy.*
- *Bad character.*
- *Making mistakes.*
- *Deviating from the straight path.*
- *Being an oppressor.*
- *Being overpowered by an enemy.*
- *That one's enemy should become happy at one's expense.*
- *Being ill fated*
- *Severe illnesses like insanity and leprosy.*
- *The curse of an oppressed person.*
- *The Satan from among man and Jinn.*
- *Strife that affects the living and the dead.*
- *Being swallowed by the ground*
- *Falling from a height.*
- *Being crushed beneath something.*
- *Drowning.*
- *Burning.*
- *Being defeated by Satan at the time of death.*
- *Dying after deserting the battlefield during Jihād.*
- *Being bitten by a poisonous creature.*
- *Not benefiting from one's knowledge.*
- *An inattentive heart.*
- *An insatiable Nafs (base instincts).*
- *Supplications that are not accepted.*

Scholars have selected Ahadīth that teach the supplications through which protection is sought, and have compiled them into books. The famous book *"Munājāt Maqbūl"* also contains such supplications.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always used to seek Allāh's protection from the evil glances of man and Jinn. However, when the Mu'awwadhatayn (Surah Falaq and Surah Nās) were revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited these regularly and stopped reciting everything else to attain Allāh's protection.

When a person recites Surah Falaq, he is securing protection against everything that Allāh has created, including the evils of the night, the evil of black magic and the evil of envious people. When he then recites Surah Nās, he secures protection against evil whispers entering his heart. Reciting these two Surahs offers ample protection against every evil and is especially recommended to guard against black magic. One should recite them with Surah Ikhlās thrice every morning and evening. Of course, they should be recited at other times as well. If a child is suffering from any pains or has been affected by the evil eye, one should recite these two Surahs and blow on the child. Children should also be taught these two Surahs and be made to recite them regularly.

RECITING WHEN IN DIFFICULTY

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that he was once travelling with the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم when an extremely strong wind suddenly started blowing and the sky became dark. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم started seeking Allāh' s protection by reciting Surah Falaq and Surah Nās. He then told Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضی اللہ عنہ that he should always seek Allāh's protection by reciting these two Surahs because there is nothing as effective as these two Surahs for seeking Allāh's protection. [*Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Khubayb رضی اللہ عنہ reports that it was raining one night and the sky had become extremely dark. Concerned about the safety of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, the companions *(Sahābah)* رضی اللہ عنهم looked for him. When they found him, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, *'Recite!"* *"What should I recite?"* enquired Sayyidina Abdullāb bin Khubayb رضی اللہ عنہ. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, *"Recite 'Qul Huwallāhu Ahad' (Surah Ikhlās), 'Qul A'ūdhu bi Rabbil Falaq' (Surah Falaq) and 'Qul A'ūdhu bi Rabbin Nās' (Surah Nās) thrice every morning and evening. By doing this, you will be protected against everything you need protection from.* [*Tirmidhi*]

RECITING AFTER EVERY OBLIGATORY SALĀH

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضی اللہ عنہ narrated that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم instructed him to recite the Mu'awwadhatayn after every Obligatory Ṣalāh.

RECITING IN FAJR SALĀH WHEN TRAVELLING

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضی اللہ عنہ has also narrated that he was travelling with the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم when he said, *"O Uqba! Should I not teach you two Surahs that are the best Surahs by which protection is sought?* "The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم then taught him Surah Falaq and Surah Nās. When they stopped for the Fajr Salāh, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم sensed that Sayyidina Uqba رضی اللہ عنہ was not himself. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم recited Surah Falaq and Surah Nās in the Fajr Salāh and then asked, *"Tell me Uqba, how do you feel?"* According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم recited the two Surahs to Sayyidina Uqba رضی اللہ عنہ and then asked him, *"How do you feel? Recite these two Surahs when you go to bed and when you wake up."*[*"Mishkāt"*]

RECITING WHEN GOING TO BED

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنها narrates that whenever the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ

عليه وسلم retired at night, he recited Surah Ikhlās, Surah Falaq and Surah Nās. He would then blow onto his palms in a manner that some saliva also reached the palms. Beginning with the head, face and front part of the body, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would then rub as much of his body as he could. He repeated this three times. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 750*]

RECITING TO CURE ILLNESS

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها has also reported that whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was afflicted with any pains, he recited Surah Falaq and Surah Nās and then blew on his body (using the method described in the foregoing Hadith). She says that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in his last illness before death, she used to recite these two Surahs, blow on the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم palms and then pass his hands over his body. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 750*]

THE ONE WHO DEPARTS ON ARRIVAL

Imām Tirmidhi رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that a person once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which act Allāh loves most of a person. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"The act of one who departs on arrival."* According to another narration of Tirmidhi and *"Shu'abul"(v. 1 p. 348)*, someone once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what was the best deed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that it was the deed of one who arrives and departs. When the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم enquired about the meaning of this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that this is the person who keeps reading the Qur'ān until he reaches the end. Upon reaching the end, he starts reciting from the beginning again.

Because of this hadith, Qurra (especially Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه and those who narrate from him) always recite *"Bismillāhir Rahmān nir Rahīm"*, Surah Fātiha and the first five verses of Surah Baqarah after completing the Qur'ān. In this manner, a new recitation of the Qur'ān is started after one recitation has been completed. Doing so is Mustahab (*preferable*) and not obligatory.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Some commentators have written that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه did not regard Surah Falaq and Surah Nās as part of the Qur'ān but used to say that they are intended to teach people how to seek Allāh's protection. Although some Scholars have reconciled his words with the facts, none of their interpretations seem satisfactory. The fact is that all the Ahadīth that report this statement from him are isolated Ahadīth and any isolated Ahadīth that opposes Mutawātir Ahadīth cannot be accepted.

Hāfidh Ibn Hazam رحمة الله عليه has written that this report from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه cannot be true because the copy of Sayyidah Ayshah's رضى الله عنها Qur'ān contains Surah Falaq and Surah Nās. Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه has also denied these reports and stated that a person who denies that Surah Falaq and Surah Nās are part of the Qur'ān is a disbeliever.

The Qirā'ah of Sayyidina Imām Āsim رحمة الله عليه, which he reports from

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه contains Surah Falaq and Surah Nās. The narrations of this Qirā'ah are Mutawātir and therefore beyond doubt. Therefore, if Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه had ever made such a statement, he must have certainly retracted it later.

Surah Falaq and Surah Nās are found in all the copies of the Qur'ān that the prophet's companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم dispatched throughout the Muslim world and these two Surahs are established as part of the Qur'ān in all the authentic narrations of Qirā'ah. Therefore, anyone who denies that they not part of the Qur'ān cannot be a Muslim.

There are many irreligious antagonists who are breeding doubts in the hearts of Muslims by quoting in their books narrations that the leading scholars of Islām have rejected. They deny the authenticity of the Qur'ān and say that if they are labelled as disbelievers, (Allāh forbid!) Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه should also be labelled as such. These are merely statements of ignorance which they use as a smoke screen to save themselves. May Allāh save us from their treachery. Āmīn.

Conclusion

With the completion of this commentary of the Mu'awwadhatayn, this entire Tafsīr *"Anwārul Bayān"* has been completed. All praises are due to Allāh, the Most Bountiful Sovereign Who has granted me the understanding of the Qur'ān and has inspired me with His knowledge by which hearts expand and minds are enlightened. I am most grateful to Allāh. How can I not be grateful to Him when He has used me for this momentous task and has cast into my heart what he has not placed in the hearts of many people of this age?

I was occupied with this great task for the past ten years and few months in the city of the guide of mankind (Madinah). It has been completed during the middle ten days of Jumādal Ula, 1419 years after the Hijrah (*migration*) of the one to whom the Qur'ān was revealed and whom Allāh Ta'āla sent as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner to the whole of mankind and all Jinn. May Allāh's choicest mercies and blessings be showered on him throughout the ages and on his family and companions who took the Qur'ān to the furthest towns. It illuminated the universe and enlightened man and Jinn. May Allāh's mercies and blessing also be showered on those who followed these illustrious souls throughout time.

These concluding words have been written in the garden of Heaven (*Riyadul-Jannah*) in the Masjid of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in which he taught the Qur'ān to His companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم on Suffa.

Only Allāh Ta'āla inspires one to act, only from Him do we implore help and only on Him do we rely.

GLOSSARY

This glossary gives only a breef, introductory meaning of each word and is by no means an authentic dictionary or a full explanation. The meanings given are exactly what the translator has given in the text except for one or two cases here and there.

اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم: *(a'udhu billahi minash shaytanir rajim)* I seek refuge in *Allah* from the accursed devil)

انا لله و انا اليه راجعون: *(inna lillahi wa inna ilahi raji'un)* see *istarja'*

(رحمه الله): May *Allah* show mercy to him

(رحمة الله عليه): May *Allah* have mercy on him

(رضی الله عنه): May *Allah* be pleased with him

(صلی الله عليه وسلم): May *Allah* bless him and give him peace

(عليه السلام): May peace be hon him

ان الحمد و النعمة لک و الملک لا شریک لک
لبیک اللهم لبیک ، لبیک لا شریک لک لبیک

a'raf,al: the heights, the parapets

aafiyah: safety, goof health and well-being

aal Imran: (the) family of Imran

aalam: all the world, universe

aalamin: universe, all creation

adal: justice, moderation

adhan: the call to prayer, five times a day

ahbar: learned Jewish scholars

ahl suffah: see *ashabus suffah*

ahlul Kitab: people of the Book

ahqab: (pl. of hiqb, q.v)

ajda: a devilish name one whose nose and ears are cut off.

akhirah: hereafter

alam arwah: world of the souls

alastu: (الست) refers to the pledge *Allah* took from all the souls (Am I not your Lord) al-A'raf, 172

alim: singular of *ulama*

amin (pronounced aamin): (exclamation after a prayer meaning) do answer, O *Allah*, let it be so, accept our prayer.

amr bilma'ruf: enjoining the reputable

an'am, al: the quadrapeds

anbiyah: Pl. of *nabi*

anfal, al: the spoils of war. This word *anfal* is the plural of *nafl* (meaning, 'something extra') and anything more than the obligatory is *nafl*. A believer fights for *Allah*'s sake, not for the booty. Hence, when he gets the booty, it is *anfal*.

anfal: booty gained after battle

ansar: supporters who welcomed the *muhajirs* from Makkah

aqd: pledge

asabat: tribes

asbat: successors, grandsons children of (Prophet) Ishaq

ashab us suffah: about 300 poor immigrants who lived on a raised platform in *Masjid Nabawi* devoted to acquiring knowledge and participating in *jihad*

ashab: s me as *sahabah*

ashabul faraid: 'people of inheritance,' those liable to receive their shares of inheritance

ashara mubashshara: ten people who were give glad tidings of Paradise

ashura: 10th of *Muharram*
asr: afternoon *(salah)*
aurah: that which the *Shari'ah* has called for being concealed, the intimate parts
awliya: (pl. of wali)
awsat mufassal: are the *surah* from *at-Tariq(86)* to *al-Bayyinah(98)*
ayah (Pl. ayat): sign, verse (of the Quran)
ayat ul Kursi: verse 255 of al-Baqarah
Aws: tribe of Madinah
Azazil: name of Iblis
ba'in (talaq): irrevocable divorce
badanah: large animal, (camels and cattles)
bahirah (بحيرة): a she-camel whose ear was slit by pagan Arabs with supertitions minds
bahirah: the she camel whose ear was cut off when she delivered five foals, the fifth being a male, so that she may not be slaughtered or mounted but allowed to roam about freely. But, *Qatadah* said that the fifth should be a female to allow the distinction
baitul izzah: *Allah's* House on the first heaven, House of honour
baqarah, al: the cow
bara'ah: exoneration
barakah: abundant good, blessing
basmalah: بسم اللّه الرحمن الرحيم *(Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim)* In the name of *Allah* the Beneficent, the Most Merciful)
bayt ul-Ma'mur: a place beneath *Allah's* throne where angels perform *tawaf*
bid: 13th, 14th, 15th of each lunar month when it is rewarding to fast
budn: pl. of badanah
buraq: an animal larger than a donkey and smaller than a horse travelling at speed of lightning. The Prophet ﷺ rode it to the heavens
buruj: stars; (twelve signs of the zodiac)
Bakht Nasr: Nebuchadnezar
Bakkah: another name for Makkah
Bani (or Banu) Isra'il: children of Isra'il
Bid'ah: innovation in religion
dajjal: antichrist
darul harb: enemy territory
dawn: penalty
dhabih: the one offered as sacrifice, Isma'il عليه السلام
dhakirin: those who engage in *dhikr*
dhamil arham: maternal relatives, blood relatives
dhamil qurba: relatives
dhann: assumption, dreams of other people
dhimmi: non-Muslim living in Islamic state under protection
dhul Khalsa: an idol regarded as the Ka'bah of Yeman, pulled down by Jarir bin Abdullah Bajali رضي الله عنه
din: religion
diyah: blood money
diyah: bloodhit, blood money
du'a: prayer, supplication, call
dubur: west/wind
durud: invocating blessing on the Prophet
eela: oath not to approach one's wife for an unspecified

time
eid (eed): festival
eid ul adha: festival on 10th Dhul Hajjah when a sacrifice is made marking that of Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ
eid ul fitr: festival marking end of Ramadan when *salah* is offered and before that *sadaqah al-fitr* is paid to the poor.
fa'i: war booty gained without fighting
fajr: dawn *(salah)*
fard: absolutely obligatory, undeniable
fasiq (pl. fasiqun): disobedient, transgressor, rebellious
fasiq: open sinner
fatil: wick a small skin in the cleft of a date stone anything very insignificant.
fatir: creator, originator
fatrah: period during which no Prophet or Messenger was sent
fatwa: ruling on a religious issue
fatwa: rulings on religions matters given by jurists
fayyi: booty received by Muslims from disbelievers after a truce, without any fighting
fidyah: expiation, atonement
fitrah: nature, moral constitution
furqan: discerner, that which differentiates
furqan: discriminator, what distinguishes
fusuq: sin
Fatihah: opening
Fir'awn: Pharaoh
ghamus: false assertion of having done something in the past.
ghanima: booty gained after battle
ghislin: filth from the wounds of inmates of Hell
ghulu: excesses, exaggeration (in religion)
haddul qadhaf: punishment for defaming someones accusing him/her of adultery
hadith (pl. ahadith): Prophet's ﷺ tradition
hady: animal of sacrifice brought by pilgrim
haidh: menstruation
hajj akbar: *Hajj* itself
hajj al badl: hajj performed on behalf of another
hajj asghar: the *umrah*
hajr aswad: The Black Stone
halal: lawful, permitted
halal: lawful, permitted
hama/ham/hami: a she camel dedicated to idols by pagan Arabs
haram: unlawful, forbidden, sacred
haram: unlawful, forbidden, sacred
hasur: chaste, abstaining from women, celibate
hawariyyin: disciples of Sayyidina Isa ﷺ
hidayah: guidance
hijab: covering, veil
hijrah: migration, migration to Madinah
hiqb: an extreamly long period of time; eighty years each day of which is like a thousand years of this world
hubal: an idol of the Makkans whose slogan Abu Sufyan raised at the *Uhud*
hudhud: hoopoe

hullf (حلف):	agreement to assist one another in some m tters
hur ayn:	large eyed maidens of Paradise
hur:	maidens of Paradise, (beautiful and fair)
Hajj:	annual pilgrimage which is obligatory on those who can perform it once in lifetime, involving visit to *Makkah, Mina, Arafat* and *Muzdalifah* (and *Madinah*).
Ham:	The stud camel whose 'grandson' impregnated a female, so it gained freedom. Or the stud camel who impregnated female camels ten times. It was set free
Harut/Marut:	two angels sent to try men
i'tikaf:	seclusion for worship - men do it in the mosque while women observe it at home
iblis:	a name of the devil
ibnus sabil:	traveller
iddah:	waiting period for a woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry.
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry
ifrad:	assuming *ihram* for only *hajj*
ihram:	every pilgrim must assume the *ihram* which makes certain lawful things unlawful to him and calls upon him to don particular dress.
ihsan:	be kind, do in a beautiful way
ihsar:	prevented from making pilgrimage
ijma:	congensus of opinion
ila(ella):	an oath by a husband that he will not have sexual intercourse with his wives
ilham:	inspiration in the heart
illiyyin:	a place above seven heaveans where souls of believers reside
ilm:	knowledge
iman:	faith, belief
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will. This phrase is added everytime one speaks of doing something in future
ira'ahit tariq:	guidance by pointing out the path
irtidad:	apostacy
isal ilal matlub:	delivering to the exact destination
isal thawab:	consigning reward to another person of one's pious deeds
isha:	night *(salah)*
islah:	reformation, correction
isra:	night journey
istabraq:	fine silk
istarja:	to say انا للـه و انا اليه راجعون (to *Allah* we belong and to Him is our return) when faced with difficulty or on loss of a dear one.
istidraj:	respite given *Allah* before He seizes finally when the sinner commits sin boldly, step by step, bringing the infidel to hell by degrees
istighfar:	to seek forgiveness of *Allah*
istikhara:	a prayer to get *Allah*'s guidance on some issue of concern
Isra'il (Prophet):	Yaqub ﷺ
jahannum:	Hell

jamarah (jamarat): three pillars marking the site where the devil tries to tempt Ismail عليه السلام
jamarah kubra: the last *jamarah*
jamarah ula: the first *jamarah*
jamarah wusta: the middle *jamarah*
janazah salah: funeral prayer
janazah: funeral
jazakAllah: may *Allah* reward you, may *Allah* give you recompense
jibt: idols, name of an idol
jihad: to fight in Allah's cause
Jannah: Paradise
Jizya: tax imposed by Islam an non-Muslims offering them protection
kaffarah: expiation
kashf: a form of Divine inspiration
khums: one-fifth (of booty)
kufr amali: disbelief in deeds
Ka'bah: cube, the building in the centre of the sacred mosque in Makkah around which pilgrims circumambulate, and which worshippers face in their *salah*.
Kaffarah: expiation
Kafir: disbeliever, infidel
Kalalah: a dead person who leaves neither father nor son but a brother or a sister
Karamah: a wonder
Kawthar: the Prophet's pond in the hereafter at which he stand and only the truly pious will be allowed to drink so that they will never feel thirsty
Khalil: friend
Kharaj: a tribute on land
Khazraj: tribe of Madinah
Khula: divorce given by a husband on his wife's initiative
Khulafa (s. Khalifah): Caliphs
Khulafa Rashidun: righteous caliphs
Khutbah: sermon
Kiraman Katibin: angels who record a person's deeds/words
Kitabah: a slave's agreement to buy his own freedom from his master through regular payments
Kuffar: (pl. of *Kafir*)
Kufr: disbelief, to conceal (truth)
Kun (كن): 'Be,' when *Allah* intends anything, He says *Kun* and it is.
la'n: curse
laat: a generous man Amir bin Zarb who fed travellers and was a judge. When he died Amr bin Luhay, made an idol of him. It was pulled down by Abu Sufya bin Harband رضي الله عنه Mughira bin Shibah رضي الله عنه
labayk: the pilgrim recites after assuming the *ihram*
laghw: futile, oath, meaningless, vain
laylatul qadar: the night of power which is the night in *Ramadan* when the Qur'an was revealed
lia'n: a couple who invoke *Allah's* curese on each other when the husband accuses his wife of immorality and she denies
lowhul mahfuz: preserved tablet
Laylatul jinn: the night when the *jinn* listened to the Qur'an and the

	Prophet's ﷺ sermon
ma'idah, al:	the tablespread
mabrur:	sinless
mahr mithal:	dower (customary or) in force in the family
mahr:	dower
mahram:	a near relative with whom it is unlawful to marry, one with whom it is always unlawful to marry
makruh tahrimi:	disapproved almost to the point of unlawfulness
makruh tahzihi:	disliked in order to purify, withdraw out of *taqwa,* abstain
makruh:	disliked, reprehensible, not approved
manasik:	rites of *hajj*
maqamul Mahmud:	praisworthy station
mashwarah:	consultation
masjid:	mosque
mathani:	the *surahs* from *surah Yunus* to *al-Hujrat*
mawdihatul hasanah:	beautiful exhortations
mawlal mawalat:	two people made a contract to help pay one another's penalty, if any, and to inherit from one another, each of these was so called
maytah:	carrion, animals that die a natural death
mi'raj:	ascension to the heavens
mihrab:	sanctuary, place of worship, a riche in the mosque (for the imam), a place of battle (like against the devil)
mirain:	*Surahs* that contain a little more than a hundred verses
miswak:	a fine tuig for brushing teeth
mu'allaq:	an attached vow
mu'anaqa:	to embrace
mu'awwadhatayn:	last two surahs of the Qur'an al-Falaq and an-Nas
muadhdhin:	one who calls the *adhan*
mubahalah:	two or more opposing parties invoke curse on the wrongdoer.
mufassal:	the *surahs* from *Qaf(50)* to the end of the Quran are socalled
mufrid:	who performs *ifrad hajj*
mufti:	jurisprudent, scholar who is eligiable to give religions rulings *(fatwa)*
muhaddith (pl. muhaddithin):	scholar of *hadith*
muhajir (muhajirun/muhajrin):	emigrants
muharramat abadiyah:	women whom a man can never marry
muharramat musaharah:	women whom a man cannot marry because of marriage ties
muharramat nasabiyah:	women whom a man cannot marry because of close relationship
muharramat rada'iyyah:	women whom a man cannot marry because of suckling
muhkamat:	clear, comprehensive verses of the Qur'an
muhsin:	a Muslim adult, free, married person who has consumated his or her marriage. If any of them commits, adultery then he or she must be stoned to death
muhsir:	one who is prevented
mujahadah:	stuggle between two; thus a persons struggle against his carnal self to better his hereafter
mujahid:	warrior
mulhid:	athiest, disbeliever

munadi:	one who calls out loudly, proclaimer, herald
munafiq:	hypocrite
munafiqun:	pl. of *munafiq*
munajat:	quiet supplication to *Allah*
muqantarah:	huge proportions
muqatta'at, huruf:	abbreviated letters like (الـم *alif laam meem*) in the first verse of 29 *surah*
muqtadi:	one who follows the *iman* in *salah*
murtad:	apostate
murtahin:	receiver
musafaha:	to shake hands
musafir:	traveller
mustahab:	desirable, recommended, that which was observed by the Prophet ﷺ sometimes and omitted sometimes.
mut'ah:	temporary marriage
mutashabihat:	allegorical verses of the Qur'an whose meaning is known to *Allah* alone, example: 'The Most Merciful is firm on the throne' (surah TaHa, 5)
mutashabihat:	allegorical, figurative, co-similar, difficult to fathom.
mutlaq:	a genaral vow
muttaqin (pl. of muttaqi):	those who fear *Allah*, who observe *taqwa*
muttaqin:	abstinent, pious those who fear *Allah*
muwahhid:	a monotheist
Ma'ruf:	righteousness reputable
Maghrib:	sunset (*salah* after)
Manat:	Banu Hudhayl and Banu Khuza'ah made this idol and made offering to it as a means of nearness to *Allah*
Manna:	*Allah's* blessing sent to *Banu Isra'il* like white sugar, with *salwa*
Maqam Ibrahim:	Station of Ibrahim, عليه السلام the rock on which he stood while building the *Ka'ba*
Maqam ul Mahmud:	the praisworthy station
Maryam:	worshipper (against verse 37 Aal Imran), mother of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام
Mash'arul Haram:	where rites of *hajj* are performed at *Muzdalifah*
Mu'min (Pl. mu'minun):	believer
Mubahalah:	invoking curse on the apposing party who is said to be the wrong-doer, mutual imprecation
Mukatab:	slave who enters into a Kitabah
Mukatabah:	same as Kitabah
Mun'aqida:	promise to do or not do something in the future
Munkar:	rejected, disreputable
Mushrik (Pl. mushrikun):	polytheist
Mutawatir (ah):	continuously handed down
Muttatu:	who perfroms *tamattu hajj*
naat:	poem in prise of the Prophet ﷺ
nabi:	Prophet
nabi:	a Prophet with no new *Shari'ah* or Book
nabuwah:	Prophethood
nafkh:	breath (of Jibril)
nafl:	optional
nafs:	base self
nahi an almunkar:	forbid the disreputable
najashi:	negus, the king of Abyssinia/Ethiopia
najwa:	secret meeting

naml:	ants
nasara:	christians
nasran:	same as *nasara*
nasrani:	singular of *nasara/nasran*
nazghun:	temptation
nifaq:	hypocrisy
night of qadr:	see *laylatul qadr*
nisa, an:	the women
nisab:	the amount of gold, silver, currency, wealth or property that attracts payment of *zakah*
nisab:	the minimum property or wealth that attracts payment of *zakah*
noqir:	tiny spot on a date pit; something very insignificant.
nur:	light
Nahl-an:	the bee
Nijr-Al:	capital city of the *Thamud*
Paraclete:	one who people praise exceedingly (which is Muhammad in Arabic)
qada:	lapse, missing a fard and making up later.
qarin:	who performs *qiran hajj*
qasas:	story
qati:	clear commands in dreams
qawa'id:	old women who remain indvors and past age of marriage
qibla:	the direction (of the *Ka'ba*) which worshippers face in their *salah*
qiran:	assuming *ihram* for both *umrah* and *hajj,* performing the *umrah* but not giving up the ihram, and after performing hajj, when due, shaving head and discarding the *ihram*
qisar mufassal:	the *surah* from *az-Zilzal(99)* to *an-Nas(114)* are so called
qisas"	retaliation
qitmir:	pellice, date stone, anything on no value
qunut:	stand in humility
Qasr (salah):	shortened *salah*
Qintar:	large wealth, 42,000 ooqiya or 4,80,000 dirhams
Qiyamah:	Day of Resurrection
ra'd:	thunder
rabb (Pl. arbab):	Lord
rabbaniyun:	those of *Allah,* who are attached to *Allah*
rabitu:	attach to a task dedicatedly, preparing beast for battle, guarding borders of Islamic state
rahn:	pledge
raj'i (talaq):	revocable divorce
rajam:	stoning married adulterer to death
rami:	pelting stones at the *jamarat*
rasul:	Messenger
rasul:	messenger who is a Prophet with a new *Shari'ah* and a new Book
rawafid:	the *shias*
rayhan:	nourishment, fragrant plants, flowers sustenance
risalat:	messengership, office of a Messenger
ruh:	spirit, mercy (commentary on verse 170/171 surah Nisa), inspiration
ruku':	bowing posture in the *salah*

Rahim, ar:	The most merciful, (attribute of *Allah*)
Rahman ar:	The Beneficent, The Merciful (attribute of *Allah*)
Ruhul Qudus:	appelation of Jibril عليه السلام
saba:	wind that blows from east to west
sabian:	(1) worshippers of angels (2) fire-worshippers who were also Jews and Christians (3) had no religion but believed in *Allah*
sabr:	patience
sadaqah:	charity
sadaqatul fitr:	charity given after end of the month of fasting (Ramadan)
sadhu:	Hindu ascetic
saff:	row
sajdah:	prostration
salam:	greeting
salatul duha:	optional *salah* after sunrise
salatul fath:	optional *salah* on gaining victory
salatul khawf:	*salah* performed while in fear
salatul wusta:	the *salah* between others, midmost *salah*
salihin:	righteous
salihun (pl. of salih)	righteous
sayyidut-tabi'in:	a title of Uwais Qarni given to him by the Prophet ﷺ for, though he embraced Islam in his times, he could not meet him because he tended to his ailing mother
shafa 'atul uzma:	the great intercession for everyone
shafi:	cure
shafiyah:	cure
shahid:	martyr, witness
shirk:	polytheism
shuhada:	Pl. of *shahid*
shukr:	gratitude
sidratul muntaha:	a lotus or jujube tree over the seventh heaven near Paradise at the limit beyond which is nothing
sijjin:	a place beneath seven earths where souls of disbelievers are kept
siqayatul hajj:	providing water to the pilgrims
sirat:	a very narrow, slippery bridge over hell which the believers will cross over swifty but the infidesls will fall into hell
siratul mustaqim:	the right path
siwak:	see *miswak*
sunnah:	practice of the Prophet ﷺ
sa'ibah (سايبة):	a slave or an animal set free for the sake of an idol
sa'iqah:	thunderclap, lightning bolt
sab'u tiwal:	the lengthy *surahs* in the begining after *al-Fatihah* - from *al-Baqarah* to *at-Taubah* or *Bara'a*
Sa'i (سعى):	the seven rounds between *Safa* and *Marwah*, the two hillocks, by the pilgrims.
Sa'ibah:	If a camel bore ten foals she qualified for exemption from work and from being milked. Her hair was cut off to mark her. But some said that it was a camel dedicated to an idol and the custodian slaughtered her and gave its meat away
Sabt:	Sabbath
Sadanatul bayt:	to unlock and lock the door of the *Ka'bah*
Saffat, as:	The rangers, the angels
Sahabah:	companions of the Prophet ﷺ (pl. of *sahabi*)

Sahabi:	s. of *sahabah*
Sahifah:	scriptures in a smaller form
Salah:	regular prayer, form of worship made up of different postures and recitals, physical worship, also invoking blessing on the Prophet ﷺ
Salwa:	*Allah's* blessing to *Banu Isra'il*, quails
Sha'air (شعار) (pl of شاعرة sha'irah):	Signs, to kens
Shari'ah:	Islamic law as prescribed by the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*, the way the religion is observed.
Shaybi:	custodian of the keys of the *Ka'bah*
Shaytan:	Satan, the devil
Shuh:	riggardliness
Siddiqun (Siddiqin):	truthful
Sirat ul mustaqim:	straight path
Sufiyah:	*sufis*, mystics
Sundus:	fine silk
Surah (Pl. Suwar):	Chapter (of the Quran)
Taybah:	another name of Madinah
ta'awwudh:	seeking refuge in *Allah* in the words
tabi'un/tabi'in (s. tabi'i):	successors of the *sahabah*, ﷺ epigones
tafaqqu:	attain deep understanding of religion
tafsir birra'iy:	interpretation based on own opinion
tafsir:	commentary, explanation, interpretation
taghabun:	mutual loss and gain
tahajjud (salah):	*Salah* offered voluntarily in the dead of the night when others are asleep
tahiyyah:	greeting, prayer, *salam*
tahlil (تحليل):	to make lawful
tahlil (تهليل):	to say *La ilaha illAllah*
tahmid:	praise of *Allah*
tajwid:	science of recital of the *Qur'an* with correct articulation and punctuation.
takbir (pl. takbirat):	to say *Allahu Akbar*
talaq:	divoce given by a husband to his wife on his own
talaq:	divorce
talbiyah:	reciting *labayk* during pilgrimage
tamattu:	assuming *ihram* for *umrah* during months of *hajj* and having performed it, assuming *ihram* for *hajj* on the 8th of Dhul Hajjah
tanfil:	proclamation that warriors may retain to themselves whatever booty they acquire, the booty being called *nafl*.
taqdir:	fate, Divine decree
taqiyya:	expression of what one really disagrees with, lying in religion - a shi'a belief
taqwa:	righteousness, a God-fearing attitude
tariqah:	a path, religious life as seen by the *sufis*
tasawwuf:	sufism mysticism, intense love of *Allah* and the Prophet ﷺ, and obedience to them
tasbih:	to glorify *Allah*
tashahhud:	at-tahiyyat recited in the sitting posture in salah and forms the words recited during the mi'raj
tasmiyyah:	to recite the basmalah
taubah:	repentance
taubah:	repentance
taught:	rebellious conduct, false god, idol

tawaf: circum ambulation of the *Ka'ba*
tawaffa: to raise souls, to lift something completely, to put something to sleep, to grant death to someone
tawakkul: trust in *Allah*
tawhid: oneness of *Allah*, monotheism
tayammum: dry ablution when water is unavailable or use of it is harmful
tiwal mufassal: are the *surah* from *Qaf(50)* to *al-Buruj(85)*
tuhr: purity apposite of menstruation
Ulama: Scholars (of religion)
Umrah: Optional pilgrimage of a lesser nature.
umm: Mother, chief
ummah (Pl. umam): Community, followers/people of a Prophet.
ummul qura (mother of all villages): a name of Makkah
uququl walidain: disobedience to parents and causing them grief and hardship
ushr: a tenth, payable on produce
uzza: a female devil who visited three accacia trees in Batn Nakhla, an idol carved by Zalim bin As'ad, destroyed by Khalid bin Walid ﷺ
wahy: to cost into the heart, to reveal, to inspire
wajib: obligatory to a degree lesser than *fard*
wali: friend of *Allah*, man of *Allah*
wali: friend, helper
wasata: best, just, reliable
wasilah (وصيلة): a female animal (camel or ewe) honoured to the idols. by observing some superstition
wasilah: It was a goat that bore seven kids. Only males could use her and upon her death, both males and females ate from her carcos
wassiyah: bequest
wazifah: rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wird: rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wudu: ablution to gain purity (before offering *salah* for instance)
Yahud: name of Jews because they repented from calf worship
Yathrib: original name of Madinah
yasin: O men! A name of the Prophet ﷺ
yastambituna: 'People with insight' but literally 'to extract water from the depths of the earth,' hence, those who can unearth the truth
yamin: oath
yaqin: conviction
Zamzam: a well in *Makkah* of incessant water of *zamzam*, discovered by Abdul Muttalib and originally scraped by an angel for Prophet Isma'il ﷺ
Zaqqum: a bitter tree in hell
Zuhr: midday *(salah)*
Zulumat (pl.): darkness, falsehood
zakah: charity prescribed at a certain rate on those holding a certain amount of assets called *nisab*, worship of financial form
zihar: telling one's wife, "You are to me like my Mother's back

INDEXES

There are three different sets of index, an index of names appearing in the commentary, an index of subjects in the commentary, and, an index of books to which the commentary refers but the major books of hadith like Bukhari, Muslim, etc. are not mentioned. The numbers against each entry refer to the pages and an 'f' following a number implies that the entry is repeated on that page or up to five following pages.

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Anwar ul-Bayan

Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri رحمة الله عليه is a renowned, recognised religious authority. He was a prolific writer and there are a number of books to his credit covering a wide range of religious subjects. His commentary on the Qur'an, Anwarul ul-Bayan, speaks highly of his deep knowledge and learning. He has written an exhaustive commentary on each surah of the Qur'an – nay on every ruku' or section and quoted earlier authorities. His work is interspersed with the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sayings and with interpretations of the learned *sahabah* رضي الله عنهم أجمعين like Sayyidina Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه and Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه and the notable *tabi'in* like Abdullah Ibn Mubarak رحمة الله عليه, Hasan Busri رحمة الله عليه, etc.

He has explained the Qur'an by the Qur'an itself and by the ahadith and then by the opinion of recognised exegates. He has not hesitated in recounting historical events and related episodes and has drawn conclusions and rulings therefrom.

In supervision of Mufti Afzal Hussain Ilyas a team of translators has rendered the Urdu commentary into lucid and easy-to-understand English. He has not failed to explain Arabic terminology with its corresponding English word in paranthesis. He has also given apt headings and sub-headings of chapters and paragraphs. This commentary is a valuable addition to Islamic literature.

Darul-Ishaat has published this commentary with the permission of Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi رحمة الله عليه and Mawlana Ilyas. A comprehensive glossary in the five volumes and indices of subjects and names at the end of each volume are included.

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